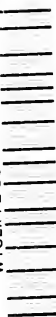


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Some Introductory Notes on

THE
EARLY CHURCH
IN
ASIA MINOR

By

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The Herald Press,
Arbroath.

To the Memory of
WALTER HOWARD FRERE,
D.D., Trin. Coll., Camb.

452.1.758 ✓

CONTENTS

1. The Importance of Asia Minor in the Early History of the Church.
2. Some Phrygian Inscriptions.
3. The Seven Churches.
4. Polycarp and Philomelium.
5. Ephesus, the Early Headquarters of Christendom.
6. Iconium, the City of Whirling Dervishes.
7. Nicomedia, the City of Persecution.
8. Nicaea, the City of the Creed.
9. The Principal Family at Pisidian Antioch.
10. Pisidian Antioch and the Xenoï Tekmoreioi.



The Author in Asia Minor



Scene near Pisidian Antioch

Note.—After the Armistice in 1918 part of the British Salonika Force was sent up to Constantinople, and the Battalion with which the writer was serving had the task of guarding the portion of the Bagdad Railway that crosses the centre of Asia Minor. This afforded opportunities of visiting places which to him were little more than names. To many others Asia Minor is a little known country; and these unpretentious sketches may, it is hoped, help to a realisation of the interest of Asia Minor and of its importance in the early history of the Church.

Grateful appreciation is expressed to the University of Chicago for kind permission to re-print the chapter on 'The Principal Family' which they published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*; and to the Dean of King's for a like kindness with regard to the chapter on Nicaea which appeared in *Theology* some years ago.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF ASIA MINOR IN EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

In less than three decades after the death of our Lord on Calvary, the headquarters of Christianity had moved from Jerusalem to Asia Minor. Asia Minor became the 'spiritual centre of Christianity'¹; and that statement of Bishop Lightfoot is quoted with approval by Sir William Ramsay.² The considered opinion of these two scholars is sufficient to indicate the importance of Asia Minor in the early history of the Church.

That Asia Minor should be a region of importance, in ecclesiastical as well as in secular affairs, is primarily the result of its natural position as a bridge between Europe and Asia. True, 'the popular presentation of Asia Minor as a causeway between western Asia and south-east Europe' may not, perhaps, 'fully or accurately describe its features or functions'³; yet its situation, nevertheless, as a bridge has always been a chief factor in its importance.

As a causeway and a bridge, Asia Minor inevitably served as the great *battleground* between East and West. The history of the country for centuries is a record of Persians and Arabs and Seljuk Turks in turn crossing and recrossing the peninsula in pursuit of their military aims.

Nor was it only for marauding expeditions that Asia Minor served as a highway. The *trade* of the East had no other route, till comparatively recent times, by which it might find its markets in the West. From a map of the road system of Asia Minor⁴, with its famous Royal Road

1) Lightfoot. *Apostolic Fathers*. Part II, Vol. 1, p. 440.

2) Ramsay. *Church in the Roman Empire*. p. 171; where, however, the reference to Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers* should be p. 440, not p. 414.

3) J. L. Myers. *Iraq*. Vol. VI, p. 76.

4) Skeel: *Travel in the First Century*. Ramsay. *Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, p. 27 ff. Inscriptions on milestones in the Roman period are given in Sterrett. *Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor*. pp. 153-5, 446, etc.

and great trade-routes passing up the river valleys and across the plains, can be gained some idea of the extent to which Asia Minor formed a useful bridge for purposes of trade. Such a map illustrates, too, how, when Diocletian preferred Nicomedia to Rome as his capital, and even more, later, when Constantine chose Byzantium for a similar reason, the road-system converged on Ancyra (modern Ankara); and North Galatia displaced in importance Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, and other cities of St. Paul in South Galatia.

Moreover, in the course of trading with the East, Greece and the West were brought into contact with the *culture* of the East; and, in turn passed on the civilization of Greece and the West across the Anatolian causeway. The conquests of Alexander the Great were another cause of the spread, if only of its veneer, of Hellenic culture.

In the history of the Church, however, even more than in the sphere of war, or trade or culture, was Asia Minor of great importance. By providing a headquarters where almost all the principal leaders of the Early Church were gathered; in the development of the organisation of the Church, with its doctrinal disputes and its Councils; in its relation to the Bible; and in its share of persecution—in all these Asia Minor is strikingly in the forefront.

For Jerusalem soon ceased to be the *Christians' headquarters*. With the death of Stephen 'there arose a great persecution of the Church which was in Jerusalem.' Most of the Christians who left Jerusalem founded colonies at Pella and elsewhere beyond Jordan; but it was to Asia Minor that the surviving apostles found their way. When the first Christian church in Jerusalem, with James at its head, was firmly established, the Apostles could turn more freely to their proper work of evangelization elsewhere. At Syrian Antioch, and at Pisidian Antioch, the struggle for Gentile freedom from the trammels of the Jewish Law was fought; and the former became the first new centre of Christian life. The widening gulf between Jewish and Gentile Christians resulted in relegating the Church of Jerusalem to 'a back-water off the main current of Christian History'.¹ And the capture of Jerusalem itself, in 70 A.D., completed the severance of the Church from its first Jewish headquarters.

1) C. H. Turner. *Studies in Early Church History*. VI.

Circumstances (of which malaria was not the least probable), led St. Paul, whom Deissmann describes as 'the man of Anatolia'¹ to Pisidian Antioch and to the founding of the churches of South Galatia. Deviated, on his second journey, from Bithynia and its great cities of Nicaea and Nicomedia, he was led by the divine call to Europe. His plans, however, for work in proconsular Asia were not abandoned; and after much labour in Europe he returned to Asia Minor and to Ephesus its capital. But he realised the importance of Greece and the West, and that he must see Rome. For this the plateau of central Anatolia was the highway, and on the route were the great cities of the western seaboard. In South Galatia he laboured for some two years. At Ephesus he stayed for an even longer period, and paid another visit towards the end of his life. In later years Smyrna displaced Ephesus in importance; but Ephesus was, in St. Paul's day, the capital of the province and the obvious centre for his work. During that long stay 'all Asia heard the Word of God,' and when he left Ephesus he appointed Timothy to take his place.

The centre of Christianity moved from Jerusalem and Syrian Antioch to Ephesus, and eventually to Rome. Asia Minor became 'the focus of activity in the Christian Church.'² After the destruction of Jerusalem St. John took up his abode at Ephesus, and remained there, probably with Andrew and Philip, till his death.³

Ramsay, discussing St. Peter's phrase 'the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion' in Asia Minor, concludes that 'he now appreciated the unique position and importance of the Asia Minor Churches, and regarded them as the chief guarantee for the unity which had once—in his view—centred in Jerusalem, and was now scattered abroad.'⁴

Asia Minor remained the centre of the Church's life till, at the close of the 2nd century, the last of the Apostles and their immediate disciples had passed away. During that period—'the mysterious formative period of the Church'—all the principal leaders of the Church were connected with Asia Minor. St. Paul, St. John, and St. Philip (who worked and was buried at Hierapolis) were followed by Timothy,

1) Deissman. *Light from the Ancient East*. pp. 235 ff.

2) Lightfoot. *Op. cit.* p. 444.

3) Ditto. p. 438. Eusebius Bk. III. c. 23.

4) Ramsay. *C.R.E.* p. 287.

Polycarp, Papias; Polycrates, Melito of Sardis, and Apollinaris of Hierapolis were other great names in the early history of the Church.¹

In the 3rd century, however, the current of Christian life has already turned to Rome and the West. Asia Minor still has its martyrs, and, later, the great Cappadocians, Basil of Caesarea and Gregory Nazianzus. But its glory has passed elsewhere, and of its history in later centuries little is known. The Muhammedan conquest swept away the fruits of Roman Government and Christian life, and 'reduced some of the most prosperous and flourishing districts to a stolid indifference of waste and desolation which no previous inroads had ever succeeded in equalling.'²

It was in Asia Minor that the influence of the new faith was most effective, and the *organisation* of the Church developed.

As the Christian way of life matured in the Roman province of Asia, with increasing inter-communication, epistolary and otherwise, between the various Christian leaders and communities, and more frequent contacts as time went on with the Roman authorities, so it played no small part in determining the character, and shaping the organization, of the whole Christian Church. Early stages of Church organization can be traced, for example, in Northern Phrygia from Christian inscriptions there.³

The first factor in the process of practical *organisation* was the recognition of the duty of Christians to see that their poorer brethren were fed. In the earliest days 'seven men of honest report were appointed over this business,' and, later, the disciples at Antioch sent relief unto the brethren in Judaea by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Allied to this duty of feeding the poor was that of hospitality. St. Paul very early appreciated the importance of this duty and frequently insists on its observance. 'Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality,' we read in Romans (12,¹³). He tells Timothy (I Tim. 3,²) that a bishop must be 'given to hospitality,' or 'a lover of hospitality,' as he puts it when writing to Titus (1,⁵). And the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (13,²) exhorts 'Be not

1) Turner, *op. cit.* v. Lightfoot *op. cit.* p. 438. Eusebius l. c. 26. V c. 24. Lactantius, *Fragments* (Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus).

2) C. H. Turner. St. Paul in Asia Minor.

3) J. G. C. Anderson (Ramsay) *Studies in the Eastern Roman Provinces*, p. 292

forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.'

The phrase 'Kindness to strangers' (Euxenie) found in Phrygian inscriptions indicates the importance the early Church attached to this virtue.¹

With the destruction of Jerusalem disappeared the localised centre of the new religion. The Christians became scattered communities of which an early example is 'the church that is in their house' mentioned in St. Paul's greeting to Priscilla and Aquila (Romans 16,⁵). The principles of unity and brotherhood are inherent in Christian teaching, and these could only be realised by a process of inter-communication between the communities now scattered in different parts of the empire. And a regular system of inter-communication was used by the heretical bodies also.²

The practical details of early church life and the discussion of varying opinions were the occasion for frequent intercourse between these scattered congregations; and Ramsay points out that it is hardly possible to exaggerate 'the share these had in moulding the development of the church.'³

How one community fared, and what it did, vastly interested other communities, as is shown in the Pastoral Epistles, and I Peter; and even more in the letters of Ignatius.

Of all this inter-communication the bishop became increasingly the focus. It needed more than spasmodic voluntary effort; definite organisation was essential, and it was in Asia Minor that this development first took place.

Asia Minor plays a large part in relation to the *Bible*. The title 'Most High God' in a Phrygian inscription is indicative of the profound influence exerted: 'the absorption of Biblical ideas paved the way for the rapid progress of Christianity in Asia Minor.'⁴

Deissman describes the N.T. as an Anatolian book, 'the sun of Asia Minor in its Anatolian home,' 'The N.T. is an exile here in the West, and we do well to restore it to its home in Anatolia.'⁵

1) Studies in E.R.P. p. 224.

2) W. M. Calder. *Anatolian Studies*, p. 80.

3) Ramsay, *Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 21; and C.R.E., p. 365

4) Studies in E.R.P., p. 211.

5) Deissman. *Light from the Ancient East*, 4th ed., p. 380.

Half the Epistles of St. Paul were written either to churches in Asia Minor or to correspondents there. The First Epistle of St. Peter is addressed to 'the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia'; that is, to Asia Minor north of the Taurus. St. Peter wrote to them as a body because he 'saw the immense importance of the churches of Asia Minor.'

The Apocalypse breathes the spirit of a time of dire persecution—the time of Domitian, however, rather than that of Nero—of those who in Asia Minor had indeed experienced the reign of terror, those over whom the persecuting sword of Damocles ever hung. The first part of the Apocalypse is addressed to 'the Seven Churches which are in Asia,' the number, according to the symbolism of the book, indicating completion. The Epistle to the Seven Churches provides a fascinating insight into the life of the Early Church in Asia Minor.

'In the early years of the 2nd century the *episcopate* was widely spread and had taken root in Asia Minor and in Syria.'¹ So writes that most learned and lucid of scholars, Bishop Lightfoot, who goes on to describe Asia Minor as the nurse, if not the mother, of episcopacy. The fall of Jerusalem resulted in St. John and other disciples making Asia Minor their new home, where episcopacy is found widely spread and firmly rooted in the 2nd century. 'All the ancient notices point to the mature development of episcopacy in Asia Minor at this time.'² That is to say, the change took place during the last three decades of the 1st century, during the lifetime of the latest surviving apostles and almost certainly with their sanction. Lightfoot refers to St. John as the living centre of episcopacy in Asia Minor, to whom the appointment of bishops there is attributed by early tradition.

Ramsay's two large volumes on the Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia give some idea of the extent to which episcopacy had developed in Asia Minor, where by the 4th century every city had its own bishop.³ Whilst the fragment that survives of a letter of Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, testifies to the early and wide spread of the Episcopate in Asia Minor.⁴

1) Lightfoot. Philippians. Dissertation on 'The Christian Ministry.'

2) Lightfoot. Apostolic Fathers Part II, Vol. I, p. 398.

3) W. M. Calder. Anatolian Studies, p. 72.

4) Eusebius 4 & 5. V. 34. and Lightfoot op. cit. pp. 393. 394.

Asia Minor figures prominently in the story of the early *controversial problems*. It is the first scene of the Paschal dispute, though the Church of Rome later shared the arena with the churches of Asia.¹ Polycarp of Smyrna took a leading part in the early stages of this dispute as to the correct mode and time of celebrating the Paschal festival.

The principal heresies were dealt with by the four great Ecumenical Councils, three of which were held in Asia Minor, whilst that at Constantinople was only just beyond the borders across the narrow straits of the Bosphorus.

The Council of Nicaea, in 325 A.D., condemned Arianism in its denial of the true deity of Christ, and affirmed that Jesus Christ is truly God. Nicaea (now called Isnik) in what was the Roman province of Bithynia in the north-west of Asia Minor, is some 20 miles south of Nicomedia. The Council was attended by more than a hundred delegates from Asia Minor as against twenty for the whole of Europe.

The Council of Constantinople, in 381, condemned Apollinarianism, and asserted that Jesus Christ is 'perfect man.'

The Council of Ephesus, 431, condemned the Nestorian teaching, and affirmed that Christ is 'one person.' The position of Ephesus on the West coast of Asia Minor is well known. The famous city itself has disappeared; but something of its past glory remains in the magnificent ruins now some distance from the sea.

The Council of Chalcedon, in 451, condemned the Eutychians who confounded the natures of Christ. The Council asserted the truth of His 'two distinct natures.' Chalcedon (the modern Kadi-Keui) is on the south side of the Bosphorus, immediately opposite Constantinople. The ancient city was close to the site of the modern Haidar Pasha station, the terminus of the Bagdad Railway. In 326 Constantine converted the Temple of Venus into the Church of St. Euphemia, and it was there that the Council was held. The columns of the Church were later used in the construction of the Mosque of Sultan Suleyman at Constantinople.

Asia Minor, again, was the scene of the 'Phrygian' heresy, Montanism, with its idea of a local centre for the

1) Lactantius Epitome. Vol. II. p. 129; Lightfoot, op. cit. pp. 382 ff; Eusebius, v. 23, 25.

unified Church, its new Jerusalem, at Pepouza near Philadelphia in the Phrygian highlands. The movement, especially active at the end of the 2nd century, shows the influence of its Phrygian origin—e.g., in the leading position it gives to Prisca, Maximilla, and women generally.¹ It was a Phrygian, Avircius, who championed the Catholic cause in opposition to Montanism.

The tombstone of another Avircius (or Aberkios) at Prymnessos (near the modern Afion-Karahissar) not only proves 'that there was a Catholic Church at Prymnessos in the anti-Catholic part of Phrygia,' but also provides 'one of the earliest representations of the Saviour—as a youthful figure.'²

Marcion, too, was a native of Aisa Minor; and an inscription at Laodicea Combusta (modern Ladik) refers to the Church of the Novatians there.³ Cotiaeum (modern Kutaya) had a Novatian bishop, and was a hotbed of heresy.⁴

'Anatolia was indeed notorious in the early Church as a hot-bed of heresies; here heresy flourished luxuriantly, heretical churches established themselves freely all over the peninsula, and heretical leaders competed with the orthodox bishops for the leadership of many Christian communities.'⁵ In Lydia, the whole Church of Thyatira embraced the Montanist heresy.⁶

In the Early *Persecutions* Asia Minor indeed figured prominently. The first phase of persecution came from the Jews, and began at Jerusalem with the martyrdom of Stephen. And when St. Paul, after his stay at Syrian Antioch pushed on to the central plateau of Asia Minor to South Galatia, it was from the Jews that opposition came. By them he was expelled from Pisidian Antioch where he probably received one of his scourgings. At Lystra he was stoned and left for dead.

The persecution of Nero was mainly confined to Rome, but under Domitian Asia Minor endured much suffering, and this is reflected in I Peter and the Apocalypse.

Pliny's correspondence with Trajan, relating to the

1) Eusebius V, 14, 16, 18, 19.

2) Ramsay, C. R. E., p. 441.

3) Ramsay, C. R. E., p. 441, n. Anatolian Studies, pp. 59, 62, 67.

4) Studies in E.R.P., p. 202, Anatolian Studies, p. 64.

5) Anatolian Studies, p. 60.

6) Epiphanius. Haer. LI. 33.

treatment of Christians, was written in Asia Minor, where he was governor of Bithynia. Under later emperors, especially Decius and Diocletian, during the period of 249-260 and 303-313, the Church in Asia Minor experienced the full force of persecution; the struggle became increasingly realised as that between the Empire of Caesar and the Church of Christ. Emperor-worship was particularly strong in Anatolia, with its Asiarchs as special officers to preside over the worship of Augustus.

Many of the most notable martyrdoms were connected with Asia Minor. Of Ignatius and Polycarp we have full and well-known details. Amongst others are Polonius of Smyrna, Carpus and Agathonica of Pergamum, Papyrus of Thyatira, Thecla of Iconium, and St. Cyr.

Besides the Lake of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, in Armenia, another Lake of the Forty Martyrs, near Philomelium (modern Ak-Chehir) the scene of a later martyrdom under the Muhammedans, shows how deeply the Christians of Asia Minor have suffered¹ at the hands of persecutors.²

Nicomedia, under Diocletian, was a special scene of violent persecution, the martyrs including the 'injudicious gentleman'³ who tore down and cut in pieces Diocletian's Edict, and, after being tortured, was burnt alive.⁴

And one town of Asia Minor suffered the fate of the modern Lidice;⁵ 'the armed soldiery surrounded a certain Christian town in Phrygia, together with the garrison and hurling a fire into it, burnt them together with women and children, calling upon Christ the God of all.'

Asia Minor is described by Deissmann as 'the classical land of emperor-worship';⁶ as such it became the centre of *pagan revivals* from time to time. The Roman authorities realised that the effect of the old religion was waning, and with it a strong, if intangible, support of the government. The old philosophies no longer held sway in popular thought, whilst a reaction had set in against the growing scepticism.

Hence a desire to erect new temples and establish new

1) Owen. *Acts of the Early Martyrs*, pp. 43 ff.

2) Ramsay. *Hist. Geog.* p. 140. *Anna Comnena* II. p. 279. 123. (Teubner Text II. p. 329).

3) Foakes-Jackson, *Hist. of Church*, p. 87 n.

4) Laetontius. *Mort. Pers.*, c. 13.

5) Eusebius, *Bk. VIII.* c. 11. *Lastantius Instit. Div.*, Bk. V. ch. 11.

6) Deissmann, *op. cit.*, p. 340 cf. pp. 348, 374, 376, 378.

priesthoods, and religious festivals and rites. The revival was instigated by the emperors in the attempt to secure their own deification, and in the 3rd century, 220-250, the Xenoï Tekmoreioi¹ represent another stage in the revival, a stage characterised by something of a caricature of Christianity. 'Such revivals were most marked, naturally enough, during times of persecution; the repression of the new faith breathed fresh life into the dying religion.'² The martyrdoms, no less than the heretical movements, prove the vitality of Christianity in those early days; they provide also an inspiring example of heroism and devotion.

1) Cf. lists in Sterrett, "Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor," pp. 240 ff.

2) Studies in E.R.P., p. 200.

II. SOME PHRYGIAN INSCRIPTIONS

Within a generation of Christ's death 'the spiritual centre of Christianity' 'had passed from Jerusalem to Asia Minor'; and when Jerusalem was captured in 70 A.D. the separation of the Church from the place of its Jewish origin was completed. During the next century Asia Minor, with Ephesus as its headquarters, was the main sphere of the Church's life. Ephesus became the 'focus of activity in the Christian Church'¹ and retained its pre-eminence till, in turn, it was supplanted by Rome.

St. Paul's Epistles and other sources afford considerable information about the early Church generally, until the 2nd century. But as the current of Church life moved westwards, Asia Minor passes increasingly into obscurity. Of the spread of Christianity across the great plateau of Asia Minor, almost nothing is known. Historians, modern as well as ancient, rarely mention Asia Minor. Much light, however, was thrown on the subject by the work of the two great scholars, Bishop Lightfoot and Sir William Ramsay. Of the former Professor Ramsay wrote: that he 'has compressed more information on the subject in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, and on the works of Ignatius and Polycarp, than all the professed historians have collected.'²

In Asia Minor there are no records such as have been recovered from the dry sands of Egypt. But one important source of information, unintentional and unprejudiced, has been brought to light, mainly through the work of Sir W. M. Ramsay. He, and other archæologists, have sought and found in Asia Minor a number of inscribed stones and monuments. The inscriptions, deciphered and transcribed with meticulous care, have been elucidated by them with the skill that can only come of much learning and long experience.

The travels of these Anatolian explorers and discoverers provide an interesting story, especially to those who know

1) Lightfoot. *Apostolic Fathers*. Pt. II. Vol. I. p. 444.

2) Ramsay *Expositor*. Vol. VIII. p. 241 n.

something of the country; whilst the information the old monuments themselves give, under the skilled treatment of the expert, is quite fascinating. For purposes of record, stone is the material least likely to perish with the ravages of time and weather. On stones were engraved treaties, epitaphs, and other inscriptions intended, not only to ensure permanence, but also to be made public. To increase the measure of publicity such stones were often set up by the side of the main roads leading out of the cities, or in some other prominent position, preferably with a sacred character (e.g., a cemetery) attaching to it. It may be noted, too, that specially important phrases or words of an inscription are engraved in the 'large letters,' referred to by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians.¹

These stones were inscribed and erected in a pagan land into which Christianity penetrated. It was a land, however, where the new religion was proscribed, and where its adherents lived always in danger of an outbreak of persecution. The Imperial Government anticipated, to some extent, the Catholic conception of the Church, in that its religion—of the worship of the majesty of Rome, with the corollary of the deification of its embodiment in the person of the emperor—was intended for all the peoples it governed. It was to be not only the universal, but the supreme, religion. For Christians, on the other hand, their faith could not be other than the sole religion. Hence conflict was inevitable, and it became increasingly a struggle between the Empire of Caesar and the Church of Christ.

Under this constant dread of persecution, two devices were adopted by the Christians for their memorials.²

As members of a 'religio illicita' it was difficult for them to meet together. The Roman Government kept a watchful eye on all associations; even a Fire Brigade was prohibited at Nicomedia lest it might be a cloak for, or cause of, any anti-government agitation.

It was, however, legal and possible for Christians to hold their services and meetings under the guise of a burial-club or a trade gild. It is known that this was the case in

1) There are 'large letters' on some of the inscriptions copied by the writer at Pisidian Antioch, inscriptions already published in Sterrett, Wolfe Expedition and Epigraphical Journey.

2) Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua Vol. VII, p. xxxvi. ff.

other parts of the Roman Empire. Inscriptions discovered in Asia Minor show that the plan was adopted there also.

For example, an epitaph from Acmonia, inscribed on three sides of an altar-like tombstone, states that Aurelius Aristetas purchased a plot of land, 'promising to the Neighbours of the First Gate People' certain payments for the care of his wife's grave and for providing that roses bloomed on it. Obviously the bequest must have been made to a society recognised as legal; and Aristetas would not have left his money to a pagan society. This 'Society of Neighbours' could only have been organised in a form allowed by law, e.g., as a burial society. The Christian Society of Acmonia lived in a special quarter of the city called the 'First Gate'; probably a noisy and poor locality near one of the city gates.¹

A second device the Christians were forced to adopt was that of couching their inscriptions in terms carefully chosen to resemble those of ordinary pagan inscriptions, but with a slight difference that would pass unnoticed—by anyone save a Christian able to appreciate the meaning conveyed by the subtle shade of difference in the language.

The average scholar to-day would find it difficult to distinguish between a Christian and a pagan inscription from such slight evidence. Archæologists, however, like Professor Ramsay, with long experience behind them, have been able to detect these differences with a sure judgment.

For instance, the inscription quoted above ends with the warning that those who fail to make the roses bloom will 'have to reckon with the justice of God.' Ramsay points out that this phrase 'have to reckon with the justice of God' is an indication of a Christian character: since not only are there many cases where it is found with certain names or symbols or peculiarities of language definitely Christian, but also others in a definitely Christian form, 'he shall have to reckon with Christ.' Wherever the phrase is found there is however nothing in the rest of the inscription specifically pagan.

It has been pointed out² that Phrygia was evangelised from three different sources; one from Ephesus, up the Meander valley, to south-west and central Phrygia; another,

1) Ramsay, *Expositor*, Vol. VIII, p. 406 ff.

2) cf. Ramsay, *E.R.P.*, p. 196.

to south-eastern Phrygia and Lycaonia; while from the north evangelisation proceeded from Bithynia as its source.

With regard to this north-western part of Phrygia, Pliny, at the beginning of the 2nd Century (102 A.D.) affords evidence of the strength of Christianity in the province of Bithynia to which he was appointed Governor. He found there, for instance, people who had been converted to Christianity 25 years before.

To the Christian missionary working southwards Cotiaeum (the birthplace of Aesop, and the modern Kutaya) was an obvious headquarters. There he would be in the valley of the Tembris river (the chief tributary of the Sangarios or Sakaria) where Christianity flourished, under conditions different from those obtaining in southern Phrygia.

Cotiaeum was the only large city in a district composed of small villages. In this Tembris valley social organisation was almost non-existent and individual liberty prevailed. In the senatorial province of Asia, of which Phrygia was a part, government was laxer than in an imperial province; and there was much more municipal freedom.

In this north-western district of Phrygia, a district of scattered villages of the Prepenisseis tribe, are found numerous inscriptions where the Christian religion is referred to quite openly. Christians there were not afraid boldly to profess their faith. 'Christians to Christians' is a common phrase used in their inscriptions.

In that district Christians would seem to have been in the majority, with their non-Christian neighbours favourably disposed towards them; which mattered the more in that there was no resident governor, and a visit from a government official to such a region of scattered villages would be a very rare occasion. The Christians in the country were not only more numerous but more influential than in the cities where close contact with government officials was inevitable.

The numerous inscriptions found in south and central Phrygia, however, where there were large cities and an advanced civilisation, indicate that there the Christians were organised under some form of community life. It is there that the religious character of their organisation is veiled; and on their inscriptions the formula 'have to reckon with

God' or 'shalt not wrong God' is a mark of the difference between the Christianity of this part of Phrygia and that of the Tembris valley.

In the two districts of Asia Minor where most Christian inscriptions (before the time of Constantine) have been found, there is this remarkable contrast, that whereas tombstones of north-west Phrygia have the inscription 'Christians (or Chrestians) to Christians' engraved on them without any attempt at concealment, the inscriptions in central and south Phrygia are of the veiled type with careful avoidance of any reference openly to Christianity.

The explanation lies in the fact that the north-west district, with its scattered villages, has been shown to have been a centre of Montanism, with the Bishop of Cotiaenum a heretic. (Asia Minor in early days was well known as a hot bed of heresies). But in central Phrygia, with its many cities, orthodox Christianity successfully resisted the missionaries of Montanism. The 'Phrygian heresy' found a fruitful field for its missionary efforts, however, where the civilising influence of Hellenism had but little effect on a rustic population.

The Montanist movement originated in the border-land between Phrygia and Mysia, which would cover the district between Philadelphia and Dorylaeum (modern Eski-Shehir, with an important station on the Bagdad railway). Pepouza, east of Philadelphia, was expected to be the scene of the New Jerusalem and of the parousia of the Holy Spirit.

Montanism regarded life as a ('militia') warfare, and emphasised the duty of the open profession of religion. Hence the boldness of the rustic Christians of northern Phrygia in their 'Christians to Christians' inscriptions.

The writings of St. John were held in special reverence by the Montanists. In the Apocalypse the letter to the Church of Philadelphia speaks of the 'open door.' Ramsay has stressed this as referring to the opportunity for missionary work along the road into Phrygia.² As has been finely stated, 'in the open profession of Christianity on the Montanist tombstones of the Tembris valley we find evidence of

1) e.g., at Pisidian Antioch, of. Sterrett. *Epigraphical Journey*, no. 142; Ramsay, *Historical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 212. And Ramsay, *E.R.P.*, p. 203.

2) Ramsay, *Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 404.

the spirit which won for Philadelphia the commendation "thou hast not denied my name".¹

In several Phrygian inscriptions the word 'Nonna' occurs. For example: 'Peace to all who pass by from God. Aurelius Alexander . . . dedicated on account of affection and excellence my sweetest children, honoured by God in the peace of God . . . in remembrance to Eugenia and to Marcellus, and to Alexander, and to Macedon, and to Nonna, sweetest children, who on one single occasion gained the inheritance of life.'²

The opening phrase, the name Nonna, and the general tone of the inscription are sure indications that it is Christian. The word Nonna itself is said to be of Egyptian origin, and means 'old woman.' In Asia Minor it came to be used, e.g., in the case of St. Basil's mother, as a personal name. But its appearance in Phrygian inscriptions is of interest through its use in a way indicating that, early in the 3rd century, there was in Phrygia an order in the Church of widows or virgins with a profession to the life of chastity. We may compare two later inscriptions from Laodicea Combusta; (modern Ladik, with a station on the Bagdad Railway); 'Aurelia Augusta along with . . . And my daughter Nonna erected (the tomb)'; and 'Gaius Julius Patricius to my sweetest Crestina, who lived in virginity, dedicated the tomb in remembrance.'³

In the African Church the institution of Virgins is met with even earlier; and Ignatius refers to them in the Church of Smyrna.⁴

The five children—'children' in the figurative sense—commemorated were martyrs, probably during the Decian persecution. Like the three presbyters of Tyriaion⁵ they suffered on one single occasion, and are honoured of God in the peace of God. For them the day of martyrdom was the birthday of a new life to which they passed 'in sure and certain hope.' In the phrase on a tombstone at Acomonia, 'they live, having escaped a great danger.'⁶

In some Phrygian inscriptions a person's *surname* is

1) W. M. Calder. *Anatolian Studies*, p. 67.

2) *Expositor*, Vol. VIII, p. 412.

3) *Expositor*, Vol. VIII, p. 414.

4) *Anatolian Studies*, p. 89 and note.

5) Ramsay. *Luke, the Physician*, p. 395

6) *Expositor*, Vol. VIII, p. 259.

given, e.g., in Eumeneia, a large and wealthy city, and a chief centre of Christianity in Phrygia:

‘To the happy dead. Aurelius Eutyches, surnamed Felix, son of Hermas, citizen of Eumeneia, and of other cities, Senator and Geraios, of the tribe of Addianus, constructed the tomb to himself and his highly respected wife, Marcella, and their children. And if any other shall attempt to bury anyone, he shall have to reckon with the living God.’¹

The opening and the concluding phrases, ‘To the happy dead,’ and ‘he shall have to reckon with the living God,’ indicate the Christian character of the inscription.

The word ‘surname’ is used in a peculiarly Christian way, not found in pagan inscriptions. A man was known to his friends by his ordinary recognised name; to a select few, to Christians, he had another name with a mysterious, mystic, meaning. Ramsay mentions the case of the Lycaonian martyr, who, at his trial, replied to the Roman governor, ‘If you ask the public name which was given me by my parents, I am called Tarasius; but if you ask my true name, I was called, as a Christian, Sozon in the holy baptism.’²

The idea of a new name, with an esoteric meaning, persists in the case of a person who enters a religious order, and assumes a new name ‘in religion.’ In Africa, and presumably elsewhere, a child on reaching adolescence, and passing through the tribal initiatory rites, is given a new name.³ It is significant that to the Church of Pergamum was promised ‘a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it.’

The phrase ‘other cities’ would imply to the ordinary reader that Eutyches was connected not only with Eumeneia but with other important cities. In the epitaph of Avircius,⁴ however, and in at least one other inscription,⁵ occurs the phrase “citizen of the select city,” and the Christians of Phrygia, to whom the Apocalypse made a special appeal, would recognise the phrase as indicating that Eutyches was a citizen not only of Eumeneia but of the heavenly city.

1) Expositor. Vol. VIII, p. 422.

2) Expositor. Vol. VIII, p. 417.

3) The writer remembers, when a missionary in Central Africa (1908-14) the pain he caused an African boy, who had passed through the ‘JANDO,’ by addressing him by his old name.

4) Lightfoot, Apostolic Fathers, Part II. Vol. I. p. 496. and Ramsay, Expositor Vol. IX, p. 268.

5) Expositor. Vol. IX. p. 393.

Of quite unusual interest is an inscription which Lightfoot describes as an example of the influence of Christianity during the 3rd century.

‘The sarcophagus and the surrounding spot along with the underlying foundation belong to Marcus Aurelius Diosdorus Carasius, surnamed Asbolus, in which he himself shall be buried, and his wife, and his children; and while I am still living I shall bury whomsoever I please, and right of burial belongs to no other, and if (anyone acts) otherwise he shall pay as penalty to the most sacred treasury 5000 denarii. So far as possible provide for thy life, beloved wayfarer, knowing the end of the life of you all is this.

‘And I bequeathed also to the Council of the Presidency of the Purple-dippers 3000 denarii for the burning of Papoi on the wonted day from the interest thereof; and if any of them shall neglect to burn the whole, the residue shall belong to the Corporation of Thremmata. And there shall be buried also the wife (of . . .).’¹

The sarcophagus is by the side of the road leading out of Hierapolis, a city with a Christian society to whom St. Paul referred when he wrote to the Colossians. As the inscription was made during the time of persecution, the wording is couched in terms ordinarily used in pagan documents yet with the subtle difference which would be recognised by Christians as Christian.

The description has several points of interest. The Council of Presidency were obviously the officials at the head of the Christian Society at Hierapolis, and were the Council of Presbyters who assisted the bishop.

The phrase ‘wonted day’ indicates the meaning of the word ‘papai.’ For the day is 6th January, on which the commemoration of Christmas and Epiphany were celebrated together as one Festival. Since this feast was also known as that of ‘Lights,’ papoi would be the word recognised by Christians as the name for the candles or torches burnt on that occasion.

The Corporation of Thremmata to whom, in case of default, the 3000 denaria were to be given, were the dependent foundlings, or slaves—or possibly the sheep in obvious reference to the followers of the Good Shepherd. In other

1) Expositor. Vol. VIII, pp. 414 ff.

words, the money not required for the ceremonies of the Feast of Lights was to be diverted to charitable purposes.

The term 'Purple-dippers,' however, is the most fascinating part of the inscription. Hieropolis shared with Thyatira the advantage of mineral springs useful for dyeing. But though there was a trade guild of Purple-dyers (Brapheis) at Hierapolis, here the name is slightly different (Braphoi). Publicly *this* would be understood as an ordinary corporation or guild recognised by the State; the Christians, however, would appreciate the subtle difference, and know that the Christian Society of Hieropolis regarded itself as the Purple-dippers, those dipped in 'the purple of a Saviour's Blood,' loosed from their 'sins by the blood' of Jesus.¹

The Phrygian Christians of the 3rd century were living in a time of fierce persecution. The fervour of their language, veiled though it was in these inscriptions, is an inspiring indication of the sincerity and depth of their faith.

1) Rev. I. 5-16.

III. THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The Seven Churches were not the only churches in Asia Minor at that time, nor were they the first to be founded. St. Paul had already written to the Church at Colossae, and had referred to Churches at Laodicea and Hierapolis. In fact 'all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word.' (Acts 19,¹⁰), though this would not apply, probably, to some parts of Phrygia off the main road routes. Moreover, there were several other Churches, e.g., at Troas, Cyzicus, Magnesia and Tralleis, more important than those included in the Seven.

Whilst St. Paul wrote to Churches as some pressing crisis or some special need arose, St. John obviously wrote to these Seven according to a uniform plan. As Professor Ramsay points out 'These Seven representative Churches stand for the Church of the Province, and the Church of the Province in its turn stands for the entire Church of Christ.'¹

The reason for the selection of these particular Seven Churches can best be understood by recalling the fact that when St. Paul wrote to the Colossians he concludes by asking them 'when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea' (4¹⁶), whilst earlier he had mentioned 'them in Hierapolis' who obviously formed the Church there.

Now these three cities of the Lycus Valley were very near to one another, Hierapolis and Laodicea forming almost one city, and Colossae being only some seven miles away; they would therefore be in constant communication with one another. Hence a letter addressed to one would be regarded as meant for all three. But Laodicea had become the centre of a group of subordinate churches, and was naturally chosen as the representative Church of the group.

What happened with these Churches of the Lycus Valley was typical of what happened throughout the Province of Asia. Similar groups were formed, in each of which one

1) Ramsay. *Letters to the Seven Churches*, p. 177.

Church was predominant and regarded as the representative Church.

At first the Churches would keep in touch with their founder, either St. Paul himself or one of his subordinates. But a process of cohesion and unity was in progress through their increasing communication with one another. This inter-communication was mainly through the medium of travel and writing.

Travel under the Roman Empire could be carried out with greater ease and confidence than at any later time till the era of modern inventions. Anyone who, e.g., has had occasion to live in Asia Minor, or knows some of the regions that were the sphere of St. Paul's travels, can only marvel at the way his journeys are described in Acts with a complete lack of any indication that they were at all remarkable.

Again the art of writing was known and in fairly general use from very early times. Professor Ramsay notes in illustration of this that even comparatively uneducated mercenary soldiers, six centuries before Christ, wrote not only their names but also accounts of their expedition, on stones and statues in Egypt.¹ This familiarity with writing, which tended to decrease in later times, meant much for the progress and organisation of the Christian Church.

And communication by letters necessitates some arrangement for their carrying and delivery. The Roman government had no general postal service, though there was an organisation for specifically imperial business. And important commercial bodies, and wealthy individuals, had similar arrangements for using their slaves as *tabellarii* or letter-carriers, with, presumably, recognised stages and khans or inns for their purpose. The Christian Church developed its own system for its letter-carrying, though the work would seem to have been done voluntarily and not by slaves.

A glance at the geographical position of the seven groups makes it clear that they do not include the whole Province nor are they the most important cities in the Province. They formed a circle of Churches confined to the west-central part of the Province. The district they encircled was then the wealthiest and most thickly populated part of the Province, with the South, East, and North unrepresented. And the main trade route passed through these cities.

1) Ramsay, *op. cit.* pp. 9. ff.

When Professor Hort pointed out that the order in which the Provinces, as given in the 'Anatolian circuit' of I. Peter, was the order in which a messenger would go in delivering letters to the chief cities of the Province he indicated the reason for the 'Asian circuit of the Apocalypse' selecting these particular Churches. This was their connection with the main trade-routes, viz., the earliest Roman road in Asia, from Smyrna to Pergamum, returning to Ephesus by the imperial post road via Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicaea.

But the trade route also passed through Magnesia and Tralleis, more important, for instance, than either Philadelphia or Thyatira. Thus the selection of the representative cities must have been shaped by some other consideration; and this was the probability that the seven groups were seven postal districts. The letter-carriers visited only convenient centres in each group, leaving secondary messengers to forward the communications to the other Churches in the group.

Thus the selection of the Seven Churches was closely connected with the increasing communication between the various Churches, the chief means for such communication being travel and letter-writing. And since the district covered by the Seven Churches probably contained the entire Church of Asia the importance of the letters is correspondingly great.



IV. POLYCARP AND PHILOMELIUM

'The Church of God which sojourneth at Smyrna to the Church of God which sojourneth in Philomelium . . . ' So begins the Letter of the Smyrnaeans which describes the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, whose festival is kept on January 26th. The Letter relates how, after the Phrygian Quintus had turned coward and was persuaded by the pro-consul 'to swear the oath and offer incense,' the multitude raised a cry, 'Away with the Atheists; let search be made for Polycarp.' Polycarp, in response to entreaty, had withdrawn to a town near the city, and there he prayed night and day for the Churches throughout the world. When apprehended, he ordered food and drink to be provided for his captors.

On reaching Smyrna, the captain of police tried in vain to prevail upon him, saying: 'Why, what harm is there in saying "Caesar is Lord," and offering incense?' As Polycarp entered the Stadium, he heard a voice from heaven saying: 'Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man.' When the magistrate urged him to revile the Christ, Polycarp replied: 'Four score and six years have I been His servant. How, then, can I blaspheme my King who saved me? . . . Come, do what thou wilt.' Then the crowds collected timber and faggots, and bound Polycarp to the stake; and he met his end with the prayer: 'I bless Thee that Thou hast granted me this day that I might receive a portion amongst the number of martyrs.' Thus the blessed Polycarp, with twelve from Philadelphia, suffered martyrdom in Smyrna.

According to Bishop Lightfoot,¹ the historian Eusebius, who quotes from the Letter at considerable length, regarded it as 'the earliest written account of a martyrdom with which he was acquainted.' Only a generation or so after the actual occurrence (in A.D. 155) of the martyrdom, Irnaeus bears witness to the genuineness of the Letter. And in recent years a tenth century MS. of the text of the Letter was dis-

1) cf. Lightfoot. *Apostolic Fathers*. Part II., Vol. 1. p. 608.

covered at Jerusalem by Professor Rendel Harris, when working at the Library of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Letter, though intended primarily for the Christians of Philomelium, was also meant for wider circulation, 'to all the brotherhoods of the holy and catholic Church sojourning in every place.' There is a Commendatory Postscript which Bishop Lightfoot thinks may well have been a postscript added by the Philomelium Church when they forwarded copies of the Letter.

'The substance of the Gospel' concludes Bishop Lightfoot in the Preface to his great commentary on Phillipians, 'is neither a dogmatic system nor an ethical code, but a Person and a Life.' It is well to stress this historic character of our faith, for there is constant need to make real to ourselves that Person Who is indeed 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Well, too, is it that we should realize that the martyrdoms of those early Christians were not stories of a semi-fabulous character, but real events in the lives of men of flesh and blood like ourselves. Here, then, in this Letter to the Church of Philomelium, is the authentic account of one of the earliest and most famous martyrdoms; no product of the imagination, but the real thing in all its vivid detail.¹

The Letter is sent to a body of Christians called 'the Church which sojourneth in Philomelium.' To how many people, however, is Philomelium more than a mere name? Yet Philomelium was then, as it is to-day a city of considerable importance. Founded by the Seleucid kings, it became, in very early days, the seat of a bishopric, along with others, in a well marked district known as Galatia Salutaris, as Sir William Ramsay tells us in his *Historical Geography of Asia Minor*.

Philomelium had a place in history. When the Turks of Iconium fought against Manuel Comnenus, they occupied Philomelium while the main body was defeated in a great battle some 60 miles away to the north-west at Afion-Kara-Hissar (Akroenus), the romantic city where many of our prisoners from Kut were confined.

In 1116 Alexius Comnenus marched with a large army through Dorylaeum to Philomelium, where, with his usual

1) *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*. Vol. VII, p. xxiii. 'At Philomelium, a site continuously occupied since Roman times, few inscriptions here survived, and none to throw any light on the early history of the Church to which the martyrdom of Polycarp has adhered.'

craft, he discovered a reason for not advancing to Iconium. This is described in the *Alexiad*:¹ 'He (the Emperor) formed a plan, namely, to enquire of God whether to abide by his decision of advancing on Iconium, or direct his attack against the barbarians round Philomelium. He wrote these questions on two papers, placed them on the Holy Table, and spent the whole night in offering hymns and lengthy intercessions to God. At dawn the priest went in and picking up one of the papers placed on the Table, opened it in the presence of all, and read out to the emperor that he was commanded to take the road to Philomelium.'

'The Emperor continued his march to Philomelium. He passed the Lake of the Forty Martyrs, then moved on again and took Philomelium by assault.'²

The march is described by the historian, Anna Comnena, in the second volume of the *Alexias*, in the index to the Greek edition of which there are half a dozen references to Philomelium. In 1146 Manuel Comnenus carried off many Christians from Philomelium to settle them at Pylai, a coast town of Bithynia—an operation repeated at later dates.

The modern name of Philomelium is Ak-Shehir, the 'White City.' Its population was, at the time the writer stayed there, about 20,000. Situated about 150 miles east of Smyrna and five miles south of the famous Fountain of Midas, it lies between the foot of the Sultan Dagħ mountain—on the other side of which are the ruins of Pisidian Antioch—and the Bagdad Railway. A broad shallow stream divides the city into two parts. There are many interesting buildings, or the remains of them, in Ak-Shehir. The Turbe, or tomb, of Sidi-Muheiddin is a beautiful octagon ornamented with superb faïences. The Tache-Medresse (College) with two Greek columns, and the Turbe of Said-Mahmoud are fine examples of Seljuk art of the thirteenth century.

But the best known feature of Philomelium is the Tomb of Nasr-Eddin Hodja. This hodja, or professor, was born in the city in 1360 and died in 1413. To the Mussulman world he was famous for his innumerable humorous and original deeds and anecdotes. Of these the following is an example: 'The Khoja was a most unready preacher; nothing did he dread more than the delivery of a sermon, nothing did

1) Bk. XV-IV, p. 399 (trans. L. E. Dawes).

2) Bk. XV-IV, p. 411. also Bk. XI-VI, p. 282 & Bk. XV-VII, p. 408.

he more earnestly seek to avoid. One day he stood up in the pulpit and said to the congregation, "O Moslems, do you know what I am going to say to you to-day?" "No," replied they. "And no more do I" said the Khoja, and hasily left the mosque. The next Friday he asked the same question, but this time the congregation answered, "Yes." "If you know, then I needn't tell you," said the Khoja, and again made off.'

'The next week, when the Khoja asked his usual question, the congregation, thinking to display great cunning, said, "Some of us do, but some of us don't." "Then let those who know tell those who don't" said the Khoja, and once more the congregation were outwitted. The following Friday, however, they determined to give the Khoja no chance of escape, and therefore decided that they would say nothing at all, not even return his greeting as he entered the mosque. "Let us see," said they "what our Khoja will do." The Khoja duly appeared and greeted the assembly; and, in accordance with the arrangement, no one answered him. "Dear me," said the Khoja, as he looked round the building, "I am quite alone; nobody has come to the mosque to-day." And with these words he departed, leaving the congregation to do without his sermons.'¹

For many years there has been no Church in Philomelium, and no Christians, save, perhaps, in recent times, an occasional Greek or Armenian employee of the Bagdad Railway at the railway station of Ak-Shehir. But when the Black Sea Army occupied the country in 1919 a company of the King's Regiment was posted at Ak-Shehir, and the battalion chaplain from H.Q. at Afion-Kara-Hissar stayed with them. Then once more the Holy Mysteries were celebrated for 'the Church in Philomelium.'

1) H. C. Lukach 'City of Dancing Dervishes,' pp. 61 ff.

V. EPHESUS, THE EARLY HEADQUARTERS OF CHRISTENDOM

When Jerusalem ceased to be the headquarters of Christendom Syrian Antioch, for a brief period, became the centre of activity. It was, however, soon replaced by Ephesus. 'Proconsular Asia became the spiritual centre of Christendom'; it became also the home of the Beloved Apostle.¹

The importance of Ephesus at that time can be realised when it can be said that 'Ephesus stood for Asia and Asia for Ephesus.' Ephesus could claim that it was Temple Warden of three Emperors, whilst 'all Asia and the civilised world worshipped' Artemis of Ephesus in A.D.55.²

St. Paul founded the Church at Ephesus.

The Church in Ephesus largely owed its origin to St. Paul. He 'came to Ephesus' and found there the twelve disciples of John the Baptist upon whom, after instruction, he laid his hands. For three months he spake boldly in the synagogue, and afterwards in the school of Tyrannus, 'and this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus!'³

Then he stayed in Asia 'for a season' and there occurred the incident of Demetrius when the crowd ran into the great street from the then inner harbour.⁴ 'After the uproar ceased he departed for to go into Macedonia,' and he exhorted Timothy to tarry at Ephesus, 'that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine.'⁵ He 'besought Epaphras to abide still at Ephesus,'⁶ whither Tychicus also was sent.⁷

In writing to the Colossians St. Paul reminds them of the work of Epaphras among them, 'as ye also learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant'; and at the end of his Epistle adds the salutation of Epaphras, 'who hath a great zeal for you and for them in Laodicea and them in Hierapolis.'⁸

1) Lightfoot. *Apostolic Fathers*, Part 4, Vol. 1 pp. 438, 440. 2) Ramsay—*Seven Churches*, pp. 230, 232, 238. 3) Acts 19, 1-10. 4) Acts 19, 24-41. 5) I Tim. 1-3. 6) I Tim. 1-3. 7) 2 Tim. 4-12. 8) Col. 1-7, 4-13.

The elders of Ephesus were summoned by St. Paul, on his last journey to Jerusalem, to meet him at Miletus; and this interview, writes Bishop Lightfoot, affords 'a striking picture of St. Paul's intimate relations with the brethren of Ephesus. There was no Church on which he spent more time and labour, none in which he felt a warmer personal interest, none with which fonder or more sacred memories were bound up.'¹

St. John's Residence at Ephesus.

The importance of Ephesus, the gate of the Roman Province of Asia,² as the new Christian headquarters was largely due to the residence there, in his later years, of St. John the Apostle, who carried on the work begun by Paul.

Eusebius tells us that 'the disciple of Jesus, John the Apostle and Evangelist, still surviving, governed the churches in Asia after his return from exile on the island (of Patmos) and the death of Domitian.'³ To this testimony may be added that of Irenaeus, who writes, 'And all the Elders who in Asia had conferred with John, the Lord's disciple witness that John had delivered these things to them, for he continued with them till the times of Trajan.'⁴ (As Trajan was emperor from 98 to 117 this would give c100A.D. as the probable date of St. John's death).

Irenaeus says later that the Church in Ephesus was founded by St. Paul where John lived on among them till the times of Trajan; it is thus a reliable witness of the apostolic tradition.⁵ The witness of Irenaeus carries weight through his having been a pupil of Polycarp who was himself a disciple of St. John. He describes Polycarp as 'a man who had not only been instructed by the Apostles, and had consorted with many of those who had seen Christ, but also had been appointed by the Apostles Bishop over Asia in the Church of Smyrna—whom we also saw in the first age of our life.'⁶ And although Irenaeus was Bishop of Lyons his home had been in Asia, and regular communication between Asia and South Gaul would enable him to be conversant with affairs and traditions in Asia Minor.⁷

Moreover he tells us he remembered 'the events of those

1) Lightfoot. Biblical Essays, p. 287.

2) Ramsay, op. cit. p. 227. 3) Eusebius Hist. Eubs. 111-23. 4) Iren. Adv. Haer. II-22-5. 5) Ibid. III-3-4. 6) Eusebius H.E. IV-14. 7) Kidd: History of Christian Church, Vol. I., p. 60.

times much better than those of more recent occasions ' since when he was ' yet a boy in Lower Asia with Polycarp ' he could ' tell also the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse—his familiar intercourse with John—as also his familiarity with those that had seen the Lord. How also he used to relate their discourses, and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord.'¹

Eusebius, quoting from the Epistle of Polycrates, writes that ' John, who rested on the bosom of our Lord, rests at Ephesus.'²

The omission of Ignatius, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, to mention St. John, whilst he does refer to St. Paul, is strange; but it does not prove that St. John never visited Ephesus, Melito, Bishop of Sardis, and Claudius Apollinaris.³ the N.T. is explained by the fact that it did not occur till his old age and after his return from Patmos.

It was in Ephesus that St. John wrote his Gospel. As Irenaeus says, ' Afterward John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned on his breast—he again put forth his Gospel, while he abode at Ephesus in Asia.'³

Irenaeus relates the incident, told by Polycarp, ' how that John, the Lord's disciple, in Ephesus, going to bathe, and seeing Cerinthus in the place, leaped out of the bath without using it, adding, Let us fly, lest the very bath fall on us, where Cerinthus, the enemy of the Truth, is.'⁴

Evidence, again, of St. John's connection with Asia Minor is afforded by Justin Martyr when he states that the Apocalypse was the work of ' a man named John, one of the Apostles of Christ,' since it is addressed to Seven Churches in Asia, and it is clearly an Asiatic work.⁵

Eusebius quotes Papias as saying that he took care ' to enquire what were the declarations of the elders ' and he points out that the name of John is twice mentioned. One he ' mentions with Peter and James and Matthew and the other apostles, evidently meaning the evangelists.' But he also refers to what was said ' by Aristion and the presbyter John, disciples of the Lord.' Thus he ' ranks the other John with the rest not included in the number of the apostles, placing Aristion before him. He distinguishes him plainly

1) H.E. V-20. 2) H.E. III-31. 3) H.E. V-8.

4) Iren. Adv. Haer. III-3-4, cf. H.E. III-28 and IV-14.

5) Kidd, op. cit. Vol I, p. 61.

by the name of presbyter. So that it is here proved that the statement of those is true who assert that there were two of the same name in Asia, that there were also two tombs in Ephesus, and that both are called John's even to this day; which it is particularly necessary to observe. For it is probable that the second, if it be not allowed that it was the first, saw the Revelation ascribed to John.¹

Ephesus became the centre of Christian knowledge, for there St. John was surrounded by those who had knowledge of our Lord and the Christian Faith. Whether drawn thither by the attraction of his presence, or acting in pursuance of some common agreement, the few surviving personal disciples of the Lord would seem to have chosen Asia Minor as their permanent abode, or at all events their permanent headquarters.²

There was first St. Andrew.³ Coming from Bethsaida, like John, and being closely associated with him in the following of their Master, this would not be unnatural.

Another fellow-townsmen, Philip the Apostle—to be distinguished from Philip the Evangelist⁴—made Ephesus his home. Though he died at Hierapolis in Phrygia, and was buried there, it is probable that he lived for some time in Ephesus since one of his daughters was also buried there. 'For in Asia'; writes Eusebius, 'mightily luminaries have fallen asleep—Philip, one of His Apostles, who sleeps in Hierapolis, and his two aged daughters. Another of his daughters rests at Ephesus.'⁵ Eusebius mentions that he received this information from the daughters of Philip.

According to tradition the Apostles Matthew, Thomas, and James lived in, or at least visited Ephesus; with Aristion and 'John the Presbyter, disciples of the Lord.' Of the latter nothing further is known;⁶ but Aristion was probably the author of the present ending, the last twelve verses, of St. Mark's Gospel. In an Armenian M.S. of the Gospel, written in 986 A.D. and discovered in 1891, these verses are stated to be 'of the presbyter Aristion.' They are 'the work of another mind, trained in another school—the historian has given place to the theologian, the interpreter of St. Peter to the scholar of St. John.'⁷

1) Eusebius H.E. III. 39. 2) Lightfoot—Biblical Essays, p. 52. 3) Lightfoot. Apostolic Fathers, Part IV., Vol. I, p. 438. 4) Lightfoot, Colossians pp. 45. 46. (5) Eusebius: H.E. III. 30, 31, 39. 6) Lightfoot Biblical Essays, p. 53. Eusebius H.E. III. 39. 7) Swete. St. Mark, p: cxi. and notes.

That St. John became the focus of a large number of the most devout and intelligent Christians is a remarkable fact, and important in its influence in defining and establishing the Faith in its earliest days. 'St. Peter and St. Paul converted disciples and organised congregations; St. John was the centre of a school.'¹

Polycarp and his pupil Irenaeus have been mentioned above; the latter was educated in Asia Minor,² and, as Bishop of Lyons, succeeded Pothinus, himself probably a native of Asia Minor;³ and Papias, of Hierapolis, 'a contemporary and friend of Polycarp.'⁴

Others in St. John's circle were: Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus; Melito, Bishop of Sardis and Claudius Apollinaris.⁵ The two latter were authors of Apologies of the Faith, in the form of discourses addressed to the reigning Emperor.

These three bishops belonged to a younger generation, but that not too far removed in age and place of residence to prevent their holding communication with, and coming under the influence of, St. John.

Justin Martyr was another who lived at Ephesus, 'for he also wrote a Dialogue against the Jews, which was held at Ephesus.'⁶

Ignatius on his way to martyrdom, wrote letters to the Christians of Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralleis, and these Christians sent deputations to him at Smyrna. Ignatius had visited Philadelphia, but not Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralleis because in his journey he had taken the northern route at Laodicaea on the Lycus, whence a messenger taking the southern route would have no difficulty in visiting these three cities.⁷

The Letters of Ignatius mention that Ephesus sent its Bishop, Onesimus, and four other delegates, Magnesia its Bishop Damas and three other representatives, whilst from Tralleis came only one delegate.⁸

The admiration of Ignatius for the Ephesians, as shown in his letter to them, is in keeping with the appreciation of the past history, and excellent services, of the Church of Ephesus stressed by St. John in the Apocalypse. Ignatius

1) Lightfoot — Biblical Essays cp. 53. 2) Lightfoot Biblical Essays, p. 54 & op. cit. p. 446. 3) Ibid. p. 54. 4) Eusebius H.E. III. 39; Lightfoot, Colossians pp. 48 ff. 5) Eusebius H.E. IV. 26, 27 & v. 22. 6) Lightfoot, op. cit. p. 444. 7) Lightfoot, op. cit. p. 364. 8) Lightfoot Apostolic Fathers. Part IV., Vol. 1, p. 365.

speaks of the faith and endurance of the Ephesians, and of the Christians there all living according to Truth, so that no heresy had a home among them.¹ In particular they hated the work of the Nicolaitanes which constituted a critical problem at that time.²

The Organisation of the Church at Ephesus.

From Ephesus St. John carried out the work of organising the Church.

Clement of Alexandria tells us 'that when, on the death of the tyrant (Domitian, died 96 A.D.), he removed from the island of Patmos to Ephesus, on being invited, he went also to the neighbouring districts of the Gentiles; in one place appointing Bishops, in another setting in order whole Churches, in another ordaining a ministry, or individuals of those indicated by the Spirit.' (Clement then goes on to tell the story of St. John and the Young Robber).

1) Ramsay — *Seven Churches*, p. 240. 2) Rev. 2-6.

VI. ICONIUM, THE CITY OF WHIRLING DERVISHES

When Paul went from Pisidian Antioch to Iconium he did not cross the Sultan Dagħ mountain and follow the Eastern Trade Route via Ilghin (Tyraeeum) and Ladic (Laodicaea Combusta)—the route of the present railway—but went due south via Neapolis along the Royal Road to Misthia, and thence eastwards to Iconium (the modern Koniah).

This Royal Road was constructed by Augustus in 6 B.C. to connect Pisidian Antioch with the other colonies of Lystra, Palais and Comana. That Paul used the Royal Road as far as possible is borne out by the Acts of Paul and Thecla which speaks of Onesiphorus, hearing that Paul was on his way from Antioch, going to meet him as far as the Royal Road.

Professor Ramsay discovered in 1884, a milestone at Comana recording that the Emperor Augustus constructed the Royal Road. But Vespasian in 74 A.D. remodelled the government, putting a great part of Pisidia with Pamphylia. By thus ending the Pisidian colonial system Lystra sank into insignificance. Iconium became the natural centre, and the road to Iconium replaced the Royal Road to Lystra.

The accuracy of the writer of Acts is shown in the phrase 'fled to cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe and surrounding country.' (Acts 14⁶). For in the flight of 18 miles from Iconium, a city of Phrygia, to Lystra, Paul crossed the Lycaonian frontier, as confirmed by Xenophon. Later Iconium was united with Lycaonia for administrative purposes, and then regarded, rightly by Cicero, Strabo and Pliny, as a Lycaonian city. But this was not the case in St. Paul's time when the people of Iconium, with the tribal jealousy strong in Asia Minor, regarded themselves as Phrygians, not Lycaonians. He came 'from Iconium of Phrygia' says Hierax on trial at Rome.¹ The reference in Acts is the evidence of one who knew the tone of a population amongst which he had actually resided.

1) cf. *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*. Vol. IV. p. xiv.. vii.

Paul's expulsion from Iconium is in contrast with that from Antioch. At Antioch he had to deal with an oligarchy of Roman colonists, influenced by ladies of high rank who used magisterial action. The expulsion from Iconium was due to mob violence, instigated by Jews in a Hellenic city where the whole body of citizens held power. In both cases the authorities were all powerful, and justified in taking action, even in inflicting personal chastisement, on persons regarded as obnoxious and infringing public order and safety. The account given in Acts is accurate and true to the facts of history.

The apostles left Iconium on another missionary journey and were able to return later when new officials had been appointed in the city. This second, and longer, residence enabled their work to become more effective and more permanent than the quick but less solid impression made at Antioch. The effectiveness of their teaching, combined with the presence of divine power, produced conversion and reformation of character in many, and caused these to be regarded as signs and wonders. The spread of the Gospel in Iconium and elsewhere was largely due to the patent evidence of the power of the Spirit in the lives of those early Christians.

On at least one occasion, when at the time of the 1st World War, the fate of the Turkish Empire was under consideration, the Sultan of Turkey was prepared to be ejected from Constantinople and to take up his residence at either Eski-Chehir or Koniah. Both these places, prominent though they have been through the present turmoil in Asia Minor, mean little to most people. Even Asia Minor itself is scarcely recognised under the current name of Anatolia. Yet Anatolia is a country of surpassing interest, in what has been well described as 'The Cradle of Christianity.'

Eski-Chehir, under its ancient name of Dorylaeum, was familiar from the records of Anna Comnena, Fulk of Chartres, Raymond of Agiles, and other authorities for the first Crusade. Koniah, or Iconium, is well known to all from other records. Many places that have figured in the ecclesiastical history of Asia Minor are represented now merely by heaps of ruins or by a few mud hovels. The sites of Derbe and Lystra, for example, have only been discovered (by Professor Sterrett) within living memory. But the

position of Koniah, or Iconium, in the centre of a high and fertile plateau, has always ensured immunity, to some extent, from the ravaging hand of time. Two factors, moreover, have contributed to its preservation from the decay and oblivion that have been the fate of so many cities of Anatolia. One is the fact of its being on the line of the Bagdad Railway; whilst the other was its importance as the 'Cathedral' city of the religious order of the Mevlevi, or Whirling Dervishes.

As one alights at the large modern railway station one is impressed by the sense of contrast. The modernity of the railway station seems out of keeping with the motley crowd of passengers. Turks, with their baggy trousers, Dervishes with their curious head-gear and carrying their carpet bags, Kurds, Armenians—all recall other scenes of the 'unchanging East.' And a modern railway, with a large railway hotel, blurs the sense of historical interest which is conjured up by the name of Iconium.

Yet few places can claim greater antiquity than this city of contrasts. According to legend, it shares with Mount Ararat the distinction of being the first spot to appear after the Flood subsided—when Jupiter ordered images (*Eikones*, hence the name *Iconium*) of mud to be made, and caused the winds to breathe life into them. And, bearing on the pride of Iconium in its antiquity, there is the story of Herodotus that King Psammeticus found, by the complete segregation of two infants, under the care of a shepherd, that the first word they uttered was a Phrygian word (*Becos*—bread). 'Thereupon the Egyptians acknowledged that the Phrygians were more ancient than themselves.'¹

Iconium is best known to us from its association with St. Paul. But it was also one of the halting places of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand; it is mentioned by Cicero; it figures prominently in the history of both the First and Third Crusades (Frederick Barbarossa winning a great victory near Iconium during the 1st Crusade), and was the scene of an important Church Council.

The period from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, however, saw Iconium at the height of its fame. It was then in the hands of the Seljuk Turks and the capital of the

1) Herodotus Bk. II, p. 1.

Seljuk Empire of Rum (so-called because it was conquered from the Byzantine Empire which was always regarded as Roman). So resplendent was Iconium at that time with palaces, mosques and medressas (seminaries), that it gave rise to the saying, 'See all the world; but see Koniah.'

The old part of the city lies away from the railway station, beyond the houses of the native Christians. Of ancient Iconium little trace remains. On the solitary hill to the north is a Byzantine Church dedicated to Bishop Amphilochius, and the mosque of Ala-ud-din, the greatest of the Seljuk Emperors. Near by are the ruins of the medressas and mosques, which contain some of the finest specimens of Seljuk art to be found in Asia Minor. Pre-eminent among them are the Karatai medresse and the mosque of the Inje Minaret (needle-shaped Minaret). The modern Azizeh mosque has two minarets with slender columns of unusual grade.

Till the recent reforms of Ataturk Iconium was chiefly remarkable as the headquarters of the Whirling or Dancing Dervishes. This religious order was founded by the Persian mystic, Jelal-ud-din, who came to Iconium from Afghanistan in the time (C. 1233) of Ala-ud-din. His hereditary successor is known as His Eminence the Chelebi Effendi. The residence of the Chelebis of Koniah was within a very beautiful Tekke, or Cloister, where small beds of bricks and flowers are surrounded by a stone pavement, and a fountain plays in the centre of the Court. To the right of the entrance are the cubicles of the resident brethren, the tomb of Jelal-ud-din being next to the mosque itself.

The doctrines of Jelal-ud-din are of a Pantheistic nature and their purpose is to enable the devout soul to be re-united with God by the 'way' of ecstasy. The particular form of ecstasy which the Mevlevi Dervishes follow is the whirling around on the floor of their dancing-room, beside the mosque, to the accompaniment of flutes and drums, played by some of their number on a raised platform.

In contrast to the 'way' of the Whirling Dervishes is the 'way' of Christ, with the sacramental means of Holy Communion.

VII. NICOMEDIA, THE CITY OF PERSECUTION

The recent persecution of Cardinal Mindszenty, Archbishop Beran, and the Church generally in Eastern Europe, suggests a glance back at the Early Persecutions of the Church, epitomised to some extent in the case of Nicomedia, especially during the Great Persecution of Diocletian.

Nicomedia—known to-day as Ismidt—is still, as in the past, one of the most important cities of Asia Minor. It is situated at the head of the Gulf of Ismidt in the Sea of Marmara. The Bagdad Railway, which starts from Haidar Pashar station (opposite Constantinople on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus), passes through the city along its principal thoroughfare.

Nicomedia is a city of some 20,000 people, and chief town of a Mutessariflik, dependant on Constantinople about 80 miles to the N.E. It is divided into 23 'quarters,' 19 for the Turks, three for the Christians, and one for the Jews. Its chief trade is in wood and salt.

The city is built on the slopes of a natural amphitheatre. Its chief buildings are a mosque, on the high ground of the city; the Greek Orthodox Church, with its Byzantine relics; military barracks; and the remains of the palace of Sultan Abdul Aziz. Walls and towers, which formed part of the acropolis of the Byzantine city still remain, with an arcade and other specimens of ancient Roman art.

Nicomedia is particularly noteworthy for the part it played in the early persecutions of the Christian Church. Whether or not it shared in the persecutions referred to in the Apocalypse and I Peter, it would seem more than likely that so important a city of Bithinia as Nicomedia was concerned in the persecution mentioned in the correspondence of Pliny and Trajan.

When Pliny was sent by the emperor Trajan in 111 A.D. to restore order in the disorganised province of Bithynia, he received anonymous accusations against people called Christians. He found that they met together before dawn

on a fixed day, and sang a hymn to Christ as God, and bound themselves by an oath to commit no crime. He wrote to the emperor for advice in dealing with these people, stating that he had executed some of them when they acknowledged the charge after being asked three times; whilst others said they had renounced Christ 25 years ago. This shows that in 87 A.D. there had been a persecution in Bithynia which led to many recanting.

The meeting together of Christians incurred the suspicion with which the Roman authorities viewed all associations in the form of clubs, guilds or sodalities. An interesting example of this occurred at Nicomedia.

A disastrous fire had broken out there, catching the people unprepared without any apparatus to deal with it. Pliny, who was Governor of Bithynia at the time, wrote to the emperor Trajan asking whether he thought 'a guild of workmen should be organised consisting of not more than 150 men,' with a guarantee that the privilege should not be used for any other purpose.

Permission, however, for the formation of this fire brigade was refused by Trajan who, apparently, 'dreaded clubs more than fire.'

The matter of Christians and guilds was an important factor in the early persecutions; and fires played a part in the outbreak of the Diocletian Persecution.

The peace of forty years which began in the reign of Gallienus, and continued into that of Diocletian, was followed by the last and worst of the persecutions, known as the Diocletian persecution.

From 292 A.D. the Empire was governed by an Imperial Council of four, two Augusti and two Caesars, Diocletian choosing 'three persons to share the government with him.' One of these was the Caesar Galerius, described by Lactantius as 'tall, full of flesh, and swollen to a horrible bulk of corpulency; by his speech, gesture, and looks he made himself a terror to all who came near him . . . worse than all the bad princes of former days.'

The evil influence of Galerius, influenced by 'haughtiness' arising from a victory over the Persians in 297, was the probable cause of Diocletian becoming a persecutor (contrary to all his previous policy) in the last four years of his life.

The occasion of the revival of religious warfare was an incident at Antioch in 302, when Diocletian offered a sacrifice, and Christians in the escort were said to have spoilt the augury by making the sign of the cross. Diocletian returned to Nicomedia, which he had made his capital. (Laetantius tells us that he had a passion for building, 'continually endeavouring to equal Nicomedia with the city of Rome in magnificence'). At Nicomedia he was joined by Galerius who insisted on war against the Christians. Diocletian, however, as in the past, was reluctant to shed their blood.

For the persecution of Diocletian, as it affected Nicomedia, there is available not only the History of Eusebius but the first-hand authority of Lactantius, who was brought by the emperor from Africa to be professor of Latin rhetoric at Nicomedia. Lactantius was a pagan when he came to Nicomedia in 290, but had become a Christian before the persecution broke out in 303. He had a personal knowledge of the chief actors and events of the Great Persecution, and was an eye-witness of the destruction of the great Church of Nicomedia—'situated on rising groves and with a view of the palace.'

In Chapter XII of his 'De Mortibus Persecutorum' he relates that (on 24 Feb. 303) 'suddenly while it was yet hardly light the prefect with chief commanders, tribunes and officers of the treasury, came to the Church in Nicomedia, and the gate having been forced open, they searched everywhere for an image of the Deity. The books of the Holy Scriptures were found and they were committed to the flames; the utensils and furniture of the church were abandoned to pillage; all was rapine, confusion, tumult.' Then the Pretorian Guards came in battle array, with axes and other iron instruments, and having been let loose everywhere, they in a few hours levelled that very lofty edifice to the ground.

On the next day the 1st Edict of Diocletian was published. All Christian books were to be destroyed. (Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, moved his books to a place of safety, replacing them with heretical books for the authorities to burn!). Church officials were to be deprived of all honours and distinctions, and other free Christians were to be reduced to the condition of slaves.

The Edict was posted at Nicomedia, and at once torn

down by a Christian—identified by some with St. George—who suffered for his rashness by being not only tortured but burnt alive and consumed to ashes.

Shortly afterwards an outbreak of fire occurred in the imperial palace. Galerius used this to denounce the Christians as incendiaries; and the palace servants were put to torture. A fortnight later another fire broke out; and Galerius left Nicomedia, protesting that he did not wish to be burnt alive.

Diocletian, in a rage, treated all Christians in the court and city at Nicomedia as enemies. Even his wife and daughter, who were Christians, were presented with the choice of death or abjuration of their faith. Dorotheus, the Great Chamberlain, Peter, and other domestics in the imperial palace were subjected to terrible torture.

Of the martyrdom of Peter a full description is given by Eusebius: 'On refusing to sacrifice Peter was scourged with rods until his bones appeared bare flesh, when vinegar mixed with salt was poured upon the mangled parts of the body. Then a gridiron and fire were produced, and the remnants of his body, like pieces of meat for roasting and eating, were placed on the fire.'

The bishop of Nicomedia, Anthimus, was beheaded for his Confession of Christ; as well as a 'multitude' of believers that thronged around him.

The edict was in force not only in Nicomedia but throughout the empire. But it is stated that the heroism of the Christians of Nicomedia was by no means displayed to an equal extent everywhere.

This 1st Edict was followed by two more in 305; whilst a 4th Edict, ordering every Christian to sacrifice, resulted in a flow of rivers of blood.

What persecution in those days meant for Christians may be seen from the fact, as Lactantius tells us, that without evidence or confession, presbyters and other officers of the Church were condemned and, with their whole families, led to execution. No regard was paid to age or sex in burning them alive, and on account of their large numbers they were herded together and encircled in the same fire. Servants were cast into the sea, with stones tied about their necks. The prisons were crowded and tortures, hitherto unheard of, were invented.

Eusebius gives further details of the sufferings of the Christians during this great persecution:

‘ Some, after being tortured with scrapings and the rack, and the most dreadful scourgings, and other unnameable agonies, which one might shudder to hear, were finally committed to the flames; some plunged and drowned in the sea, others voluntarily offering their own heads to the executioners, others dying in the midst of their torments, some wasted away by famine, and others again fixed to the cross. Some, indeed, were executed as malefactors usually were; others, more cruelly, were nailed with the head downwards, and kept alive until they were destroyed by starving on the cross itself.’

And he relates how ‘ The armed soldiery surrounded a certain town in Phrygia, together with the garrison, and hurling fire into it, burnt them, together with women and children, calling upon Christ the God of all. And this, because all the inhabitants of this town, even the very governor and magistrates, with all the men of rank, and the whole people confessed themselves Christians, and would not obey, in any degree, those that commanded them to offer sacrifice.’

Such was the persecution of the early Church before its victory over the power of Caesar, in a struggle continued by the Communist State, under differing circumstances, in our own day.

VIII. NICAËA—THE CITY OF THE CREED

Asia Minor has been called the cradle of the Church, and the Christian Church to-day is largely governed by the Statutes and Canons formulated by the Councils which were held in Asia Minor. No place, however, in Asia Minor is more famous in Church history than Nicaea. It was the scene in 325 A.D. of the First General Council from which the Nicene Creed gets its name, a Council attended by more than one hundred bishops from Asia Minor, whilst the whole of Europe could send only twenty. Yet few places of historical fame are so little known as Nicaea, and to-day the city of the great victory of the Christian Faith is represented by the small Turkish town of Isnik with a population mainly Mohammedan!

Nicaea lies to the north-west of Asia Minor in what was the Roman province of Bithynia. It is situated on the shore of Lake Ascanius, which is connected by a river with the Gulf of Mudania and the Sea of Marmora. Ismidt, better known in history as Nicomedia, is twenty miles away to the north-east. Nicaea is off the beaten track of tourists, and is only reached with some difficulty. Perhaps the best means of approach is by the Bagdad Railway from Haidir Pasha (the terminus opposite Constantinople on the Asiatic side) to Mekedje Station on the Sakaria river about 200 kilos down the line towards Eski-Shehir (Dorylaeum). Behind Nicaea is a succession of hills, green with oaks and other trees, and tapering away to Bithynian Olympus, with its snowy summit clearly visible in the distance. The view from the top of the encircling hills is one of extreme beauty. The city ruins are on the shore of the lake, lapped by tranquil waters as clear and blue as those surrounding a coral island in the Indian Ocean. But for all this beauty there hovers around a prevailing impression of sadness. For scarcely anywhere is the 'melancholy of the past' more pronounced.

Nicaea is built upon the site of former cities, the first of which, Pythopolis, is said to have been founded by Persius to the memory of a friend drowned in the river Ascanis. In Pliny's time the soil was already strewn with the débris of these ancient foundations.

According to Strabo Nicaea was refounded in the 4th Century B.C. by Antigonus, son of Philip, who named it Antigonía. After the fall of Antigonus Lysimachus seized it and renamed it Nicaea in honour of his wife. The Bithynian kings made it their metropolitan city, whilst under the Romans it was the residence of a pro-consul. It was embellished by Claudius, by Pliny who built a theatre there, and by Hadrian who fortified it and constructed marble gates.

The emperors of Byzantium were the heirs of Rome and to them it was one of the joys of their empire. The Byzantine emperor Justinian, 483-565, built an imperial palace, basilicas, baths, and an aqueduct which still remains.

At the time William of Normandy was conquering England the Seljuk Turks descended from the steppes north of Mongolia and, after capturing Bagdad, proceeded to overrun and conquer Asia Minor. Soliman established at Nicaea the capital of an empire which subsequently became known as the Sultanate of Rum. Later the capital was transferred to Iconium, where for three centuries the Seljuk Sultans continued to rule. Their empire under Ala-ud-din the Great enjoyed a period of unusual splendour, the ruins of the medressas, mosques and tombs of Iconium still bearing witness to their patronage of culture and art.

In 1333 Nicaea was captured by the Turks under Orkhan the Conqueror, and under Turkish rule it has since remained.

Nicaea figures prominently in the story of the First Crusade. It was the first city besieged by the Crusaders, some of whom, says Anna Comnena 'were guileless men and women marching in all simplicity to worship at the tomb of Christ'—after they had all left Constantinople and mustered in Asia Minor. The Christian host represented as many as nineteen different nations; but, remarks Fulk of Chartres, 'though divided by language we seemed to make but one people by our love of God.' In the military exercises and combats between the knights of different countries

before the walls of Nicaea distinguishing badges were adopted which afterwards developed into the custom of wearing of coats of arms.

The story of the siege of Nicaea is given with much detail by the Chroniclers, who relate how the first attack failed, and how the relieving army of Kilij Arslan, 'exultingly dragging with them the ropes wherewith to bind us captive,' were signally defeated. It is said that the Crusaders cut off the heads of some of the slain and 'flung them into the city, a thing that wrought great terror amongst the Turks inside.'

A massive tower was undermined and the structure fell at night. : *Itaque capta esset civitas nisi noctis tenebrae obstitissent* ' writes Raymond of Agiles (596 B).

The siege had already dragged on for seven weeks when it was discovered that supplies were reaching the defenders by means of the lake which washed two sides of the city. With the aid of the Emperor Alexius vessels were brought overland and launched upon the lake. Then the Turks, rather than allow themselves to fall into the hands of the Christians, surrendered to Alexius, of whom Raymond writes ' *Quamdiu vixerit, populus semper ei maledicat, et proclamat proditorem eum.*'

The ancient walls are the principal architectural feature of Nicaea, and for grandeur and majesty they are probably unsurpassed. Rectangular in form they enclose an area with a circumference of some nine miles.

The system of defence was one of the most complete in Asia Minor, the defensive works being well preserved and still almost entire. There was first the moenium, or rampart of the Romans, flanked by 108 semi-circular towers and wide enough to allow a carriage to pass along it. In front of the moenium ran a second line of defence, the ancient agger, originally composed of earth thrown up from the moat; later a brick fortification defending the approaches of the moat. This had 130 towers, arranged like a chess board, and corresponding to the intervals between the towers of the moenium but lower than these last so as to give fuller play to war machines placed upon them.

Finally, there was the moat, now filled in by landslips, but in times when attack might be expected, capable of being inundated by means of canals communicating with the lake.

The walls are built of bricks, joined together by cement

of unusual thickness. The interior of the walls was filled in with a kind of rubble composed of sand and pebbles. Sometimes the bricks are found set obliquely, and in several places the walls are dressed with courses of ashlar and brick alternately. There is considerable similarity with the fortifications of Constantinople, both cities probably being fortified during the fourth century.

The three Great Gates are of much beauty and interest. That of Yeni-Chehir lies to the south east, opening on to the road from Brousse; the Stamboul Gate faces it to the north west, and that of Lefke, resembling the Stamboul Gate, to the east. Each of these gates is flanked on both sides by a massive brick tower. The Lefke Gate was built by the Emperor Hadrian in 120 A.D., and has an Arch of Triumph in marble with a brick construction above. The Gate of Yeni-Chehir is fortified with two large towers attached to a quadrangular fore-part rising obliquely in front of the moenium.

An inscription on the Gate of Stamboul gives a dedication to Marcus Aurelius Claudius, about 270 A.D. mentioning work done under the superintendence of Vellius Macrinus, consular legate.

The Church of the Repose of the Virgin was the only orthodox Church still standing at the time of the outrages at Nicaea during the 1st World War. It dated from the tenth century, and contained some good mosaic work, especially in the portico or narthex and in the roof of the apse. Within the Church was an ancient stone sarcophagus dating from the 4th century, and 'a rude picture commemorating the one event which amidst all the vicissitudes of Nicaea has secured for it an immortal name,' by its details obviously a copy of a very early work, if not itself very ancient, thinks Canon Douglas who regards the mosaic work as altogether unique and probably work of the 10th-11th century. This famous ikon of the Great Council depicted St. Nicholas of Myra clouting Arius on the ear.

Of the Church of St. Sophia, the old Cathedral of Nicaea, only ruins remain in the form of a mosque. It was not the basilica of the Great Council, since not only are architectural considerations against such a view, but also because it is uncertain whether the Great Council was held

in a Church. Moreover the Emperor Constantine who presided at the Council in person had not yet been baptized.

Residents of Nicaea point out the traditional site of the imperial palace, right against the waters of the lake, as the scene of the Council, where the Emperor honoured the bishops by sitting in their midst. St. Sophia was almost certainly, however, the scene of the last Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 787.

Nicaea, like Broussa and most towns of Islam, has its Mosque Verte, its Yechil-Djami. This is a quadrangular building surrounded by a portico of columns. Its porch is a beautiful specimen of Seljuk art, more remarkable than the decoration of the interior which gives its name to the mosque. It is a product of the same art as the monuments of Konia. (Iconium).

Wars, sieges, fires and earthquakes have been the constant lot of this city so famous in history and legend, and no waters have been more stained with blood than those of Lake Ascanios, which lap its ruined walls. To-day Nicaea is a small Turkish village with the grass growing amidst the heaps of stones which once were palaces and temples. From the site of the Council 4 little tesserae or mosaic stones were picked up by the son of the priest of Isnik and given to the writer in 1919, and one of these now adorns the Chalice used in the Chapel of St. Faith in Westminster Abbey! The priest himself, Jordanes, was martyred by the Turks after suffering cruel indignities. With one exception the whole of the 500 Christian inhabitants of Isnik were massacred by Djemal Pasha, and their bodies thrown into either two caves or a well.

Thus do Christian people still bear witness with their blood to the Truth as it is enshrined in the Creed of Nicaea.

IX. THE PRINCIPAL FAMILY AT PISIDIAN ANTIOCH

Of ancient Pisidian Antioch little now remains. Much of its building materials, and many of its inscribed stones, have been incorporated into the modern Turkish town of Yalowadj a mile or more to the South.

Antioch's fine site, now deserted, is a low plateau, rectangular in shape, and sloping upwards to the East where there is a sharp dip down to the River Anthios. To the North East towers up the snow-capped Sultan Dagħ mountain: across it a track,¹ dangerously steep in places, leads to Ak-Shehir, the old Philomelium. Here there is a station on the Bagdad Railway which runs from Haidar-Pasha, opposite Constantinople, past Konia (Iconium), and through the Taurus Range with its Cilician Gates. On the Eastern side of the Anthios rises sharply another range of hills where formerly was the Hieron, or sanctuary, of the native god Men.

The site of Antioch presents a somewhat desolate appearance. The remains, however, of the Roman aqueduct are impressive, and give some idea of the strength of the fortress when its walls were standing. But save for what is left of a theatre—with the holes still showing where the ends of the supports for a platform had been inserted—it is at Yalowadj, rather than on the old site, that archæological research has been rewarded.

Pisidian Antioch was founded—according to Strabo, as a colony from Magnesia on the Meander²—about 300 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator who named it after his father, Antiochus. It was the city stronghold to guard the fertile district of Southern Phrygia from the depredations and ravages of the tribes inhabiting the Pisidian and Taurus mountains.

In 39 B.C. Antioch was given by Anthony to Amyntas, the last king of Galatia. On the latter's death in 25 B.C. (at

1) "A bridle path." *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, Vol. VII, p. xix., where a modern alternative route is mentioned.

2) Strabo XII, 569. of Ramsay. "Cities of St. Paul." p. 259.

the hands of the Homanadenses, a tribe of Pisidian marauders) it was re-constituted as the Roman garrison colony, Colonia Caesaraea Antiochia.

Politically, Antioch was in the province Galatia. Geographically, it was a city of Phrygia, not Pisidia; though it was because of its proximity to Pisidia and its marauding tribes that it was occupied by the Romans. Hence Pisidian Antioch always had a military character.

To most people "Pisidian Antioch" is little more than a name. Statements about it, as in other similar cases, are apt to be regarded rather in the nature of legend than of fact. But work begun systematically in the neighbourhood by Sir William Ramsay and other archæologists in 1912 has thrown considerable light on conditions and life there in the first centuries A.D.¹ And discoveries in connection with one particular family at Antioch help to make the place live again to some extent; and, in two cases at least, have an interesting bearing on the Biblical record of the Early Church.

An inscribed stone, discovered in a wall of the school adjoining the mosque in Yalowadj first drew attention to this family.

The inscription² was dedicated to Gaius Caristanus Sergia Fronto Caesianus Julius, who is described as superintendent of public works, pontifex, priest, and prefect of both P. Sulpicius Quirinius, duumvir, and M. Servilius. The inscription ends with the statement that 'to this man first of all, at State expense, by a public decree of the decuriones (members of the local Senate) the statue is set up.'³

The inscription thus gives a short summary of the career of this citizen Caristanus Fronto.

In the following year another inscription⁴ referring to Caristanus was discovered. It was on a stone that had been used in building the wall of a courtyard at a village close to the site of Antioch.

The dedication is to this same Caristanus Sergia Fronto Caesianus Julius, who is described again as chief engineer

1) *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, Vol. VII, p. xxxi., states that 185 inscriptions of the Roman period have been recorded.

2) *Journal of Roman Studies* III. p. 253.

3) The inscription on a later statue to a P. Aricius Maximus is given in Sterrett, *Epigraphical Journey to Asia Minor*, No. 99 (*Archæological Institute of America*) cf. Ramsay, *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 259.

4) *J.R.S.* III., p. 254.

(or superintendent) of public works, pontifex, priest and prefect (i.e., deputy) of P. Sulpicius Quirinius, the duumvir, and of M. Servilius, prefect.

The addition that he was tribune of the 12th Legion, the Thunderers, and prefect of the cohort of men from the Bosporos, indicates that this inscription was later than the first, in which otherwise these offices would obviously have been included. That Caristanius held three municipal posts, and two municipal priesthoods proves that he was a man of importance, belonging to a leading family in Antioch. It may be assumed that he was of equestrian rank.

Other inscriptions¹ show that for more than a century the family of this Caristanius played a leading part in the life and history of Antioch.

For instance, an inscription² relating to the 4th generation of the Caristanii shows this provincial family still taking its place in the highest rank of the governing class.

'T. Caristanius Calpurnianus Rufus (dedicates this) on account of his services as a mark of honour to C. Caristanius (the son of Gaius) Sergia Fronto, tribune of the soldiers, prefect of cavalry from the Bosporos, elected into the Senate (i.e., from the Knights) among those of tribunician rank, promoted among those of praetorian rank, propraeor of Pontus and Bithynia, commander of the late Emperor Vespasian Augustus of the 9th Spanish Legion in Britain, propraeor of the late Emperor Titus Caesar Augustus, and of the Emperor Domitianus Caesar Augustus of the province of Pamphylia and Lycia, patron of the colony.

There is a break in the references to the Caristian family at Antioch; but two generations later the names of dependants—e.g., C. Caristanius Hamyrus, C. Caristanius Agapetus, C. Caristanius Faustus, etc.,³ indicate that the family was still occupying a leading position at Antioch.

The Caristanii are interesting, not only as throwing some light on a distant outpost and its principal family, but also through their connection with at least two names in the Biblical record of the early history of the Church.

And first with the incident at Paphos related in Acts, ch. 13.

1) e.g., J.R.S. III. p. 258.

2) J.R.S. III. p. 260.

3) Sterrett. *Epigraphical Journey*. Nos. 107. 108.

In a house at the outlying quarter of Salir near Antioch, Sir William Ramsay discovered in 1912 the following inscription:

‘To L(ucius) Sergius Paullus, the younger, son of Lucius, one of the commissioners in charge of the Roman streets, tribune of the soldiers of the 6th Legion styled Ferrata, quaestor, etc.’

Ramsay had no doubt in regarding this Sergius Paullus the younger as the son of the Sergius Paullus, proconsul of Cyprus, of Acts 13. His suggestion was confirmed by German and other archæologists. This Sergius Paullus the younger, member of a distinguished Roman family, was almost certainly governor of the province Galatia—before becoming Consul—and the inscription records the first stages in the normal career of official promotion.

Further light was thrown on Ramsay’s deduction by the discovery of an inscription¹ on a large block of stone in a conspicuous position near the Bazaar at Yalowadj.

‘Honour to Sergia Paulla and her husband erected by their son. The most excellent Sergia Paulla, daughter of Lucius, wife of Gaius Caristianus Fronto, Legatus of the Emperor Caesar Domitian Augustus, with patrician rank (“antistrategos”²) of Lycia and Pamphylia, Gaius Caristianus Fronto, son and grandson of Gaius, did honour with loving duty to his own most sweetest parents.’

The name of the wife was partly lost until a later discovery in 1913 revealed her full name as Sergia Paulla. Since the father of Lucius Sergius Paullus, governor of Galatia, was proconsul of Cyprus in 47 A.D. his son would not be likely to have a daughter old enough to be married to Caristianus. Hence she would be the sister of the governor of Galatia, and daughter of the proconsul of Acts 13.

That a Roman lady like Sergia Paulla, who belonged to the highest class of nobility, should have been married to a local man from a family of only equestrian rank is something unusual. It was an obvious inference to attribute this rapid rise, of an otherwise obscure Roman knight, to the fact of his marriage, and the influence which his wife, as sister of the governor Sergius Paullus, would be in a position to exert.

At the same time it is unlikely the marriage would have

1) Sterrett, *Epigraphical Journey*, No. 108 & J.R.S. III. p. 262.

2) Sterrett, *op. cit.*, p. 135 note.

taken place had not the husband been a man whose outstanding ability had gained the notice of the governor, by whom he would be favourably mentioned to the imperial authorities and to whom the first statue in Pisidian Antioch had been erected.

But though there is evidence of the Caristanii producing distinguished citizens of Antioch, and occupying a prominent position in the city for over a century, there is, however, some break in the continuity. This leads Ramsay to point out that the eldest son of Caristanus and Sergia Paulla, Gaius Caristanus Fronto who erected the inscription to his parents, seems to disappear from the records of Antioch. Moreover, though he was a Roman, brought up in Roman ways and in a Roman career, he wrote the inscription in Greek,¹ degenerating from Roman to Greek custom.

From these two noteworthy facts, both recognised signs of Christianity, it is inferred that this eldest son of Caristanus and Sergia Paulla became a Christian. For Christians at that time were unwilling to undertake public office through risk of participation in pagan festivals. And again, Greek was the language used by the Church at that time: its use in the inscription would indicate that the writer was a Christian.

As a young man Caristanus served in a Legion as a military tribune, then commanded a cavalry regiment, the Bosphorus Horse; he was created a Senator in A.D. 70, and after serving as governor of Pontis and Bithynia, was, in A.D. 75, given the command of the Ninth Spanish Legion in York.

His Christianity, suggests Ramsay, came to him from his mother. Sergia's brother, the governor of Galatia, would naturally remain a pagan, having been educated in Italy like other young nobles. Sergia, on the other hand, would almost certainly have lived with her father on his return from Cyprus. That her father was probably a man of intellectual interests has been shown by Bishop Lightfoot; and she may well have come to share her father's tastes. The deep impression made on the proconsul by St. Paul at Paphos most likely led eventually to Sergius Paullus embracing the Christian Faith² which his daughter, Sergia, would adopt also.

1) Ramsay. *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 280.

2) This theory is not invalidated by Rackham (*Acts* pp. 200-202) whose objections Ramsay satisfactorily answers in 'Ramsay, *Trustworthiness of the New Testament*, pp. 167-8.

The principal family of Pisidian Antioch, then, had a close connection with the proconsul of Acts, Ch. 13, some of its members probably being Christians.

One inscription refers to Caristanius as 'prefect of the cavalry from the Bosporos, elected into the Senate—propraetor of Pontus and Bithynia, commander of the Ninth Spanish Legion in Britain.'

Caristanius would naturally bring his wife with him when he took up the command of the Ninth Legion, especially at a time when things were decidedly more settled in Britain than they had been some years earlier. Thus we have the picture of Caristanius of Pisidian Antioch and Sergia Paulla, the daughter of the proconsul of Cyprus, living in York, in a house within a few yards of York Minster.

It has been pointed out¹ that the Roman historian Plutarch mentions his meeting at a Festival held at Delphi in A.D. 83, a teacher named Demetrius of Tarsus who had just returned from Britain—and that after a stay of some years, since otherwise the long journey from the East would not be worth while.

In the Yorkshire Museum at York are two small votive tablets, to a man calling himself Demetrius the Scribe. It has been reasonably concluded that Demetrius of Tarsus and Demetrius the Scribe were one and the same person, and that he was a clerk 'in a government office, possibly connected with the financial branch, but more probably that of G.O.C. IXth Legion.' If Demetrius of Tarsus lived in York and was employed there, probably by Caristanius himself, we may well imagine that he and Sergia Paulla, both coming from the same part of the world, would often meet and discuss together their famous compatriot, Paul of Tarsus—and Paul's preaching that caused Sergia's father to be astonished at the teaching of the Lord.²

Secondly, this leading family also had a close connection with the Quirinius of St. Luke, Ch. 2.

Publius Sulpicius Quirinius held high office as the reward of proved ability and hard work. He came of an undistinguished family, and had no connection, Tacitus says, with the patrician family of the Sulpicii.³ He was governor

1) A. R. Burn. 'Agricola,' p. 114.

2) Acts 13 12.

3) Tacitus, Annals. III, 48.

of Crete and Cyrene, and proved himself a very competent and successful soldier in campaigns against nomad tribes in the deserts of Cyrene.¹

This success led to his being given the command against the Homanadenses who, in 25 B.C. had captured and killed the Roman client king Amyntas. With the death of Amyntas his kingdom passed to Augustus, when it became the new imperial province of Galatia. To Augustus fell the task, and duty, of avenging the death of Amyntas.

Cilicia was part of the province of Syria, and Quirinius was appointed governor of Syria in order to conduct the war against the Homanadenses. The Homanadenses had the reputation of being 'hard to catch'² and by capturing their stronghold beyond the Cilician frontier Quirinius earned the distinction of a triumph.³

The Homanadenses, however, concerned not only Syria to the South but Antioch to the North where they had long been a menace. It was to check the Homanadenses that the colony of Pisidian Antioch had been founded, and obviously Antioch would have a considerable share in the conduct of the war. Thus the war was waged both on the Galatian side to the North and on the Cilician side to the South, the Homanadenses being caught between the forces of the two provinces.

Confirmation of this was afforded by Ramsay's discovery of the above inscription where Caristianus Fronto is described as being the prefect nominated by Quirinius (honorary duumvir of the colony, while governor of Syria)—and likewise by Servilius.

Quirinius was successful in the Homanadensian War⁴ and in gratitude the colony of Antioch elected him duumvir. In that office, however, he was represented by a deputy, Caristianus, the distinguished citizen of Antioch.

It may be asked why this remote colony of Antioch elected Quirinius as its duumvir, or chief magistrate, and also conferred on Servilius the same high honour: and why Quirinius and Servilius both appointed Caristianus as their prefect or deputy. The reason would seem to be the war

1) Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. X. pp. 152, 156, 194, 271, 877.

2) Strabo XII. 569.

3) Tacitus Annals, III, 48.

4) The Homanadensian War. Cambridge Ancient History, X. 270-3.

with the Homanadenses; and that as governors of the provinces of Galatia and Syria respectively they took joint action in conducting operations against the enemy both from the North and South. By both appointing Caristanius as their deputy they would ensure that all the forces of the colony would be in the hands of a man in a position to act as dictator if need arose in time of crisis.

The services which Caristanius rendered in the Homanadensian War would be a sufficient reason for conferring on him the honour of a statue. That this statue was the first erected in the colony of Antioch at State expense indicated an early date for the Homanadensian War. And this is confirmed by the fact that the five Pisidian Colonies, linked with Antioch by the important road-system, the Via Sebaste, with mile-stones¹ (giving distances from Antioch), some of which still remain, were founded with a view to preserving peace after the successful conclusion of war.

The date of the foundation of these colonies was 6 B.C. and since Quirinius was given two 'supplicationes' before the final reward of a triumph the war probably lasted more than two years, covering the period 10-7 B.C.

The inscription, says Ramsay, is a crowning step in proof that the story in Luke 2,¹³ is correct; for it shows that Quirinius was engaged in the war, and therefore was governor of Syria before 6 B.C. Whereas critics of the New Testament asserted that Quirinius never governed Syria till 5-6 A.D., nine years after the death of Herod, this statue in Antioch, to Caristanius, its most distinguished citizen, helps to show that Quirinius *was* governing Syria at the time of the 1st Enrolment mentioned² by St. Luke 2².

Ramsay aptly remarks that 'No man can make historical investigation and historical proof take the place of faith. The Christian religion is a matter of living, not of mere intellectual knowledge; and the just live by faith. Yet it is not without its virtue to have the truth of the concomitant circumstances demonstrated. One must remember that Christianity did not originate in a lie and we can, and ought, to demonstrate this as well as to believe it.'

1) Details of Roman mile-stones are given in Sterrett, *Epigraphical Journey*, pp. 240 ff.

2) Ramsay. *Trustworthiness of the New Testament*. Ch. XIV.

X. PISIDIAN ANTIOCH AND THE XENOI TEKMOREIOI

(THE MAN WHO GAVE THE TEK MOR TWICE)

For some two and a half centuries—till the time of Constantine and the Edict of Milan, 313 A.D.—Christians were always liable to persecution. Though the actual number is difficult to compute, there is no doubt that the noble army of martyrs in the Early Church was very large. (Nor has persecution been unknown in later and modern times).

At first persecution was spasmodic, and depended largely on the caprice of magistrates in administering the law. But persecution, like a sword of Damocles, ever hung over the Christian's head. And from the time of the Emperor Severus (193-211 A.D.) and particularly under Decius and Diocletian, the Roman government made a systematic attempt ruthlessly to stamp out the Christian religion. The 3rd century was dominated by the struggle between the Roman Empire and the Christian Church, between Caesar and Christ.

Times of severe persecution were accompanied by a revival of the pagan religion in antagonism to Christianity. And nowhere was the revival more vigorous than in Asia Minor.

Some seventy years ago Sir W. M. Ramsay, the great authority on Asia Minor, was on his way to Pisidian Antioch when he noticed in the cemetery of the village of Gondane close to the city—or rather the aqueduct and other remains that had not been used for the modern town of Yalovadi, a mile away—a stone column of unusual size and shape. It was about twelve feet high, with an inscription rudely carved and somewhat ungrammatical, dating from about 225 A.D., and giving a list of persons with the names of the villages to which they belonged, and a sum of money which each had, apparently, subscribed.¹

1) Ramsay, E.R.P., p. 210; Sterrett, Wolfe Expedition, pp. 226-273 and 349, 350; and Pauletic Studies, p. 117.

Subsequently other stones with similar lists were found. For instance, the inscription on page 238 in Professor Sterrett's 'Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor' reads 'For the Fortune and victory of our Emperor . . . the Tekmoreian Guest-friends erected this bronze statue . . . the secretary being Aurelius Papas . . .'

A study of these lists brought out the fact that the persons named came from Saghir and other villages at the N.E. corner of the twin-lake Limnai, near Pisidian Antioch. There the estates of the Phrygian god Men had become the imperial estates of the Roman emperor who had supplanted the local deity.¹ The subscriptions—the largest being of 6000 denarii, equivalent to about £10 in present value—indicated local conditions of some affluence. Their object was to provide statues for the Good Fortune of the emperor, and of the great goddess Artemis; whilst the size of the subscriptions, and the word 'dipylon' suggest also work on a temple of the goddess near Lake Limnai where the hieron or native social centre was situated.

The inscriptions moreover mention gifts which subscribers had made at their own expense. Amongst these are a phiale, or chalice; patellae, or patens for the food served to a god; and a libanotris, or censer.²

The subscribers in these lists are called Xenoi Tekmoreioi, the Tekmoreian Guest-friends. But what exactly this word 'Tekmoreian' meant was for some time doubtful. Professor Sterrett suggested that 'tekmor' was the name of a village with which the Tekmoreians were connected. The use of the word as a verbal form 'oi tekmoreusantes,' however, gave Professor Ramsay the clue, namely, that an archaic word had been used afresh, and referred to the giving of some sign or pledge. Thus the inscriptions would be records of subscribers who had performed a certain action and given the tekmor; and hence are termed Tekmoreioi.

The imperial estates were the strongholds of paganism in Asia Minor. The test of loyalty required of Christians was the offering of incense to the emperor; and the offering of the tekmor was an additional pledge of loyalty to the State.

1) Ramsay, E.R.P. pp. 305, 306, and Hist. Geog., p. 177; R. G. Collingwood, Roman Britain, p. 221.

2) Sterrett, Wolfe Expedition, p. 366.

The Society of Xenoï Tekmoreioi had its officials. The head bore the title 'Protanaklites,' which implied that a leading feature of the brotherhood's ritual was a common meal. A meal, followed by sacrifice to a deity, was a characteristic feature of ancient religious societies. The Pro-tanaklites took the first place at the sacred meal, and was assisted by the 'anagrapheus,' or clerk, and two 'brabeutai,' or auditors and financial administrators.

It was characteristic of these anti-Christian societies to imitate Christian terms and institutions. The Xenoï Tekmoreioi would seem to have carried out at their social meal a caricature of the Christian Eucharist. In this was included the giving of the 'dipyros,' or twice-fired bread which was used as a tekmor or test of religion and loyalty.¹ Normally a single test was sufficient to prove that a man was a good pagan.

Amongst those who paid a subscription and gave the tekmor was, however, a man named Lucius who 'tekmoreusas dis,' i.e., gave the tekmor twice.² Does it not look as if Lucius was a Christian who had given the tekmor and then recanted; and a second time his courage failed him?

The devotion and loyalty of the Christian was indeed tested in those early days of persecution. What a choice was his as he stood before the pagan altar! Just a pinch of incense in acknowledgment of Caesar—or to be true to his Saviour, with the certainty of cruel torture and death. What inward struggles must Lucius have suffered if for the second time he gave the tekmor, and sat down to a meal which inevitably brought back memories of his participation in the Christian Eucharist!

1) Ramsay, *Seven Churches*, pp. 110, 427; and *Pauline Studies*, p. 118.

2) *E.R.P.*, p. 330. 346.

(The late Professor A. B. Cook, F.B.A., of Cambridge, in a personal letter to the writer, pointed out the importance of recent articles on the subject in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real Encyclopadia*).

1111



